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DRYDEN.

When Jubal struck the chorded shell.

Vol. III. Page 117.

THE

WORKS

OF THE

BRITISH POETS.

WITH

LIVES OF THE AUTHORS,

BY

EZEKIEL SANFORD.

VOL. XII.

DRYDEN.

PHILADELPHIA:
PUBLISHED BY MITCHELL, AMES, AND WHITE.
William Brown, Printer.

1819.

Eastern District of Pennsylvania, to wit:

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the sixteenth day of March, in the forty-third year of the Independence of the United States of America. A. D. 1819, Ezekiel Sanford, of the said district, hath deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

"The Works of the British Poets. With Lives of the Authors, by Ezekiel Sanford."

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned."—And also to the act, entitled, "An act supplementary to an act, entitled, 'An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

D. CALDWELL,
Clerk of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

JOHN DRYDEN.

WITH

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY

EZEKIEL SANFORD.

12892

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FABLES

FROM

BOCCACIO AND CHAUCER.

TO HIS GRACE

JAMES, DUKE OF ORMOND.

MY LORD, 1699.

SOME estates are held in England by paying a fine at the change of every Lord: I have enjoyed the patronage of your Family, from the time of your excellent Grandfather to this present day. I have dedicated the Translation of the Lives of Plutarch to the first Duke; and have celebrated the Memory of your heroic Father. Though I am very short of the age of Nestor, yet I have lived to a third generation of your House; and by your Grace's favour am admitted still to hold from you by the same tenure.

I am not vain enough to boast that I have deserved the value of so illustrious a Line; but my fortune is the greater, that for three descents they have been pleased to distinguish my Poems from those of other men; and have accordingly made me their peculiar care. May it be permitted me to say, that as your Grandfather and Father were cherished and adorned with honours by two successive Monarchs; so I have been esteemed, and patronized by the Grandfather, the Father, and the

Son, descended from one of the most ancient, most conspicuous, and most deserving Families in Europe?

'Tis true, that by delaying the payment of my last Fine, when it was due by your Grace's accession to the titles and patrimonies of your House, I may seem, in rigour of law, to have made a forfeifeiture of my claim; yet my heart has always been devoted to your service: and since you have been graciously pleased, by your permission of this address, to accept the tender of my duty, 'tis not yet too late to lay these volumes at your feet.

The world is sensible that you worthily succeed, not only to the honours of your ancestors, but also to their virtues. The long chain of magnanimity, courage, easiness of access, and desire of doing good, even to the prejudice of your fortune, is so far from being broken in your Grace, that the precious metal yet runs pure to the newest link of it; which I will not call the last, because I hope and pray, it may descend to late posterity: and your flourishing Youth, and that of your excellent Dutchess, are happy omens of my wish.

'Tis observed by Livy, and by others, that some of the noblest Roman families retained a resemblance of their ancestry, not only in their shapes and features, but also in their manners, their qualities, and the distinguishing characters of their minds: some lines were noted for a stern, rigid virtue, savage, haughty, parsimonious, and unpopular: others were more sweet and affable; made of

a more pliant paste, humble, courteous, and obliging; studious of doing charitable offices, and diffusive of the goods which they enjoyed. The last of these is the proper and indelible character of your Grace's Family. God Almighty has endued you with a softness, a beneficence, an attractive behaviour, winning on the hearts of others; and so sensible of their misery, that the wounds of fortune seem not inflicted on them, but on yourself. You are so ready to redress, that you almost prevent their wishes, and always exceed their expectations: as if what was yours, was not your own, and not given you to possess, but to bestow on wanting merit. But this is a topic which I must cast in shades, lest I offend your modesty; which is so far from being ostentatious of the good you do, that it blushes even to have it known: and therefore I must leave you to the satisfaction and testimony of your own conscience, which, though it be a silent panegyric, is yet the best.

You are so easy of access, that Poplicola was not more, whose doors were opened on the outside, to save the people even the common civility of asking entrance; where all were equally admitted; where nothing that was reasonable was denied; where misfortune was a powerful recommendation, and where (I can scarce forbear saying) that want itself was a powerful mediator, and was next to merit.

The history of Peru assures us, that their Incas, above all their titles, esteemed that the highest which called them lovers of the poor: a name more glorious than the Felix, Pius, and Augustus of the

Roman emperors; which were epithets of flattery, deserved by few of them: and not running in a blood like the perpetual gentleness and inherent goodness of the ORMOND family.

Gold, as it is the purest, so it is the softest and most ductile of all metals: iron, which is the hardest, gathers rust, corrodes itself; and is therefore subject to corruption: it was never intended for coins and medals, or to bear the faces and inscriptions of the great. Indeed 'tis fit for armour; to bear off insults, and preserve the wearer in the day of battle: but the danger once repelled, 'tis laid aside by the brave, as a garment too rough for civil conversation: a necessary guard in war, but too harsh and cumbersome in peace, and which keeps off the embraces of a more humane life.

For this reason, my Lord, though you have courage in an heroical degree, yet I ascribe it to you but as your second attribute: mercy, beneficence, and compassion, claim precedence; as they are first in the divine nature. An intrepid courage, which is inherent in your Grace, is at best but a holiday kind of virtue, to be seldom exercised, and never but in cases of necessity: affability, mildness, tenderness, and a word, which I would fain bring back to its original signification of virtue, I mean goodnature, are of daily use: they are the bread of mankind, and staff of life: neither sighs, nor tears, nor groans, nor curses of the vanquished, follow acts of compassion and of charity: but a sincere pleasure, and serenity of mind, in him who performs an action of mercy, which cannot suffer the misfortunes

of another, without redress: lest they should bring a kind of contagion along with them, and pollute the happiness which he enjoys.

Yet since the perverse tempers of mankind, since oppression on one side, and ambition on the other, are sometimes the unavoidable occasions of war; that courage, that magnanimity and resolution, which is born with you, cannot be too much commended: and here it grieves me that I am scanted in the pleasure of dwelling on many of your actions; but αἰδέομαι Τρωας is an expression which Tully often used, when he would do what he dares not, and fears the censure of the Romans.

I have sometimes been forced to amplify on others; but here, where the subject is so fruitful that the harvest overcomes the reaper, I am shortened by my chain, and can only see what is forbidden me to reach: since it is not permitted me to commend you, according to the extent of my wishes, and much less is it in my power to make my commendations equal to your merits.

Yet in this frugality of your praises, there are some things which I cannot omit, without detracting from your character. You have so formed your own education, as enables you to pay the debt you owe your country; or, more properly speaking, both your countries: because you were born, I may almost say in purple, at the Castle of Dublin, when your Grandfather was Lord Lieutenant, and have since been bred in the Court of England.

If this address had been in verse, I might have called you, as Claudian calls Mercury, *Numen commune, gemino faciens, commercia mundo.* The better to satisfy this double obligation, you have early cultivated the genius you have to arms, that when the service of Britain or Ireland shall require your courage and your conduct, you may exert them both to the benefit of either country. You began in the Cabinet what you afterwards practised in the Camp, and thus both Lucullus and Cæsar (to omit a crowd of shining Romans) formed themselves to the war by the study of history, and by the examples of the greatest captains, both of Greece and Italy, before their time. I name those two commanders in particular, because they were better read in Chronicle than any of the Roman leaders; and that Lucullus in particular, having only the theory of war from books, was thought fit, without practice, to be sent into the field, against the most formidable enemy of Rome. Tully, indeed, was called the 'learned Consul' in derision; but then he was not born a soldier: his head was turned another way. When he read the Tactics, he was thinking on the Bar, which was his field of battle. The knowledge of warfare is thrown away on a General who dares not make use of what he knows. I commend it only in a man of courage and resolution; in him it will direct his martial spirit, and teach him the way to the best victories, which are those that are least bloody, and which, though achieved by the hand, are managed by the head. Science distinguishes a man of honour from one of those athletic brutes, whom undeservedly we call 'heroes.' Cursed be the poet, who first honoured

with that name a mere Ajax, a man-killing idiot. The Ulysses of Ovid upbraids his ignorance, that he understood not the shield for which he pleaded: there was engraven on it, plans of cities, and maps of countries, which Ajax could not comprehend; but looked on them as stupidly as his fellow-beast, the lion. But on the other side, your Grace has given yourself the education of his rival; you have studied every spot of ground in Flanders, which for these ten years past has been the scene of battles and of sieges. No wonder if you performed your part with such applause on a theatre which you understood so well.

If I designed this for a poetical encomium, it were easy to enlarge on so copious a subject; but confining myself to the severity of truth, and to what is becoming me to say, I must not only pass over many instances of your military skill, but also those of your assiduous diligence in the war; and of your personal bravery, attended with an ardent thirst of honour; a long train of generosity; profuseness of doing good; a soul unsatisfied with all it has done; and an unextinguished desire of doing more. But all this is matter for your own historians; I am, as Virgil says, *Spatiis exclusus iniquis.*

Yet not to be wholly silent of all your charities, I must stay a little on one action, which preferred the relief of others to the consideration of yourself. When, in the battle of Landen, your heat of courage (a fault only pardonable to your youth) had transported you so far before your friends, that

they were unable to follow, much less to succour you; when you were not only dangerously, but in all appearance mortally wounded; when in that desperate condition you were made prisoner, and carried to Namur, at that time in possession of the French; then it was, my Lord, that you took a considerable part of what was remitted to you of your own revenues, and, as a memorable instance of your heroic charity, put it into the hands of Count Guiscard, who was governor of the place, to be distributed among your fellow prisoners. The French commander, charmed with the greatness of your soul, accordingly consigned it to the use for which it was intended by the donor: by which means the lives of so many miserable men were saved, and a comfortable provision made for their subsistence, who had otherwise perished, had not you been the companion of their misfortune; or rather sent by Providence, like another Joseph, to keep out famine from invading those, whom in humility you called 'your brethren.' How happy was it for those poor creatures, that your Grace was made their fellow sufferer! and how glorious for You, that you chose to want, rather than not relieve the wants of others! The heathen poet, in commending the charity of Dido to the Trojans, spoke like a Christian: *Non ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco.* All men, even those of a different interest and contrary principles, must praise this action, as the most eminent for piety, not only in this degenerate age, but almost in any of the former; when men were made *de meliore luto;* when examples of charity were frequent, and when they were in being, *Teucri pulcherrima proles, magnanimi heroes nati melioribus annis.*

No envy can detract from this; it will shine in history; and like swans, grow whiter the longer it endures: and the name of ORMOND will be more celebrated in his captivity, than in his greatest triumphs.

But all actions of your Grace are of a piece; as waters keep the tenor of their fountains: your compassion is general, and has the same effect as well on enemies as friends. 'Tis so much in your nature to do good, that your life is but one continued act of placing benefits on many; as the sun is always carrying his light to some part or other of the world: and were it not that your reason guides you where to give, I might almost say that you could not help bestowing more, than is consistent with the fortune of a private man, or with the will of any but an Alexander.

What wonder is it then, that, being born for a blessing to mankind, your supposed death in that engagement was so generally lamented through the nation! the concernment for it was as universal as the loss: and though the gratitude might be counterfeit in some, yet the tears of all were real: where every man deplored his private part in that calamity, and even those, who had not tasted of your favours, yet built so much on the fame of your beneficence, that they bemoaned the loss of their expectations.

This brought the untimely death of your great Father into fresh remembrance; as if the same decree had passed on two short successive genera-

tions of the virtuous; and I repeated to myself the same verses which I had formerly applied to him: *Ostendunt terris hunc tantùm fata, nec ultrà esse sinunt.* But to the joy not only of all good men, but of mankind in general, the unhappy omen took not place. You are still living to enjoy the blessings and applause of all the good you have performed; the prayers of multitudes whom you have obliged, for your long prosperity; and that your power of doing generous and charitable actions may be as extended as your will; which is by none more zealously desired than by

YOUR GRACE'S

most humble,

most obliged, and

most obedient servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

TO HER GRACE THE

DUCHESS OF ORMOND:

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM OF

PALAMON AND ARCITE.

FROM CHAUCER.

MADAM,

The bard who first adorn'd our native tongue;
Turn'd to his British lyre this ancient song;
Which Homer might without a blush rehearse,
And leaves a doubtful palm in Virgil's verse:
He match'd their beauties, where they most excel;
Of love sung better, and of arms as well.

Vouchsafe, illustrious Ormond, to behold
What power the charms of beauty had of old;
Nor wonder if such deeds of arms were done,
Inspir'd by two fair eyes that sparkled like your own.

If Chaucer by the best idea wrought,
And poets can divine each other's thought,
The fairest nymph before his eyes he set;
And then the fairest was—Plantagenet!
Who three contending princes made her prize,
And rul'd the rival nations with her eyes;
Who left immortal trophies of her fame,
And to the noblest order gave the name.

Like her, of equal kindred to the throne,
You keep her conquests, and extend your own:

As when the stars, in their ethereal race,
At length have roll'd around the liquid space,
At certain periods they resume their place,
From the same point of heaven their course advance,
And move in measures of their former dance;
Thus, after length of ages, she returns,
Restor'd in you, and the same place adorns;
Or you perform her office in the sphere,
Born of her blood, and make a new platonic year.

O true Plantagenet! O race divine!
(For beauty still is fatal to the line),
Had Chaucer liv'd that angel-face to view,
Sure he had drawn his Emily from you:
Or had you liv'd, to judge the doubtful right,
Your noble Palamon had been the knight:
And conquering Theseus from his side had sent
Your generous lord, to guide the Theban government.

Time shall accomplish that; and I shall see
A Palamon in him, in you an Emily.

Already have the Fates your path prepar'd,
And sure presage your future sway declar'd:
When westward, like the sun you took your way,
And from benighted Britain bore the day,
Blue Triton gave the signal from the shore,
The ready Nereids heard, and swam before
To smooth the seas; a soft Etesian gale
But just inspir'd, and gently swell'd the sail;
Portunus took his turn, whose ample hand
Heav'd up his lighten'd keel, and sunk the sand,
And steer'd the sacred vessel safe to land.

The land, if not restrain'd, had met your way,
Projected out a neck, and jutted to the sea.
Hibernia, prostrate at your feet, ador'd
In you, the pledge of her expected lord;
Due to her isle; a venerable name;
His father and his grandsire known to fame:
Aw'd by that house, accustom'd to command,
The sturdy kerns in due subjection stand;
Nor bear the reins in any foreign hand.

At your approach, they crowded to the port;
And scarcely landed, you create a court:
As Ormond's harbinger, to you they run;
For Venus is the promise of the Sun.

The waste of civil wars, their towns destroy'd,
Pales unhonour'd, Ceres unemploy'd,
Were all forgot; and one triumphant day
Wip'd all the tears of three campaigns away:
Blood, rapines, massacres, were cheaply bought;
So mighty recompense your beauty brought.

As when the dove, returning, bore the mark
Of earth restor'd to the long-labouring ark,
The relics of mankind, secure of rest,
Op'd every window to receive the guest,
And the fair bearer of the message bless'd;
So, when you came, with loud repeated cries,
The nation took an omen from your eyes,
And God advanc'd his rainbow in the skies,
To sign inviolable peace restor'd; [accord.
The saints with solemn shouts proclaim'd the new

When at your second coming you appear,
(For I foretel that millenary year)

The sharpen'd share shall vex the soil no more,
But earth unbidden shall produce her store:
The land shall laugh, the circling ocean smile,
And Heaven's indulgence bless the holy isle.

Heaven from all ages has reserv'd for you
That happy clime, which venom never knew;
Or if it had been there, your eyes alone
Have power to chase all poison but their own.

Now in this interval, which fate has cast
Betwixt your future glories, and your past;
This pause of power, 'tis Ireland's hour to mourn;
While England celebrates your safe return,
By which you seem the seasons to command,
And bring our summers back to their forsaken land.

The vanquish'd isle our leisure must attend,
Till the fair blessing we vouchsafe to send;
Nor can we spare you long, though often we may lend.
The dove was twice employ'd abroad, before
The world was dried; and she return'd no more.

Nor dare we trust so soft a messenger,
New from her sickness, to that northern air;
Rest here a while your lustre to restore,
That they may see you, as you shone before;
For yet, the' eclipse not wholly past, you wade
Through some remains and dimness of a shade.

A subject in his prince may claim a right,
Nor suffer him with strength impair'd to fight;
Till force returns, his ardour we restrain,
And curb his warlike wish to cross the main.

Now past the danger, let the learn'd begin
The' inquiry, where disease could enter in;
How those malignant atoms forc'd their way;
What in the faultless frame they found to make their prey?
Where every element was weigh'd so well,
That Heaven alone, who mix'd the mass, cou'd tell
Which of the four ingredients could rebel;
And where, imprison'd in so sweet a cage,
A soul might well be pleas'd to pass an age.

And yet the fine materials made it weak;
Porcelain, by being pure, is apt to break:
Ev'n to your breast the sickness durst aspire
And, forc'd from that fair temple to retire,
Profanely set the holy place on fire.
In vain your lord like young Vespasian mourn'd,
When the fierce flames the sanctuary burn'd:
And I prepar'd to pay in verses rude
A most detested act of gratitude:
Ev'n this had been your elegy, which now
Is offer'd for your health, the table of my vow.

Your angel sure our Morley's* mind inspir'd,
To find the remedy your ill requir'd;
As once the Macedon, by Jove's decree,
Was taught to dream an herb for Ptolemy:
Or Heaven, which had such over-cost bestow'd,
As scarce it could afford to flesh and blood,
So lik'd the frame, he would not work anew
To save the charges of another you.
Or by his middle science did he steer,
And saw some great contingent good appear,
Well worth a miracle to keep you here:

* Christopher Love Morley, M. D.

And for that end, preserv'd the precious mould,
Which all the future Ormonds was to hold;
And meditated in his better mind (kind.
An heir from you, which may redeem the failing

Bless'd be the power which has at once restor'd
The hopes of lost succession to your lord,
Joy to the first and last of each degree,
Virtue to courts, and, what I long'd to see,
To you the Graees, and the Muse to me.

O daughter of the Rose, whose cheeks unite
The different titles of the red and white*;
Who Heaven's alternate beauty well display,
The blush of morning, and the milky way;
Whose face is paradise, but fenc'd from sin:
For God in either eye has plac'd a cherubin.

All is your lord's alone; ev'n absent, he
Employs the eare of ehaste Penelope.
For him you waste in tears your widow'd hours,
For him your eurious needle paints the flow'rs;
Such works of old imperial dames were taught;
Such, for Ascanius, fair Elisa wrought.
The soft reeesses of your hours improve
The three fair pledges of your happy love:
All other parts of pious duty done,
You owe your Ormond nothing but a son;
To fill in future times his father's place,
And wear the garter of his mother's race.

* Alluding to her descent from the Plantagenets, as daughter of Henry, Duke of Beaufort.

PALAMON AND ARCITE;

OR,

THE KNIGHT'S TALE.

FROM CHAUCER.

BOOK I.

PALAMON AND ARCITE;

OR,

THE KNIGHT'S TALE.

BOOK I.

In days of old there liv'd of mighty fame,
A valiant prince; and Theseus was his name:
A chief who more in feats of arms excell'd
The rising nor the setting sun beheld:
Of Athens he was lord; much land he won,
And added foreign countries to his crown:
In Scythia with the warrior-queen he strove,
Whom first by force he conquer'd, then by love;
He brought in triumph back the beautous dame,
With whom her sister, fair Emilia, came.
With honour to his home let Theseus ride,
With love to friend, and fortune for his guide,
And his victorious army at his side.
I pass their warlike pomp, their proud array,
Their shouts, their songs, their welcome on the way:
But were it not too long, I would recite
The feats of Amazons, the fatal fight
Betwixt the hardy queen and hero knight;
The town besieg'd, and how much blood it cost
The female army and the' Athenian host;

The spousals of Hippolita, the queen;
What tilts and tourneys at the feast were seen;
The storm, at their return, the ladies' fear:
But these, and other things, I must forbear.
The field is spacious I design to sow,
With oxen, far unfit to draw the plough:
The remnant of my tale is of a length
To tire your patience, and to waste my strength;
And trivial accidents shall be forborne,
That others may have time to take their turn;
As was at first enjoin'd us by mine host:
That he, whose tale is best and pleases most,
Should win his supper at our common cost.

And therefore, where I left I will pursue
This ancient story, whether false or true,
In hope is may be mended with a new.
The prince I mention'd; full of high renown,
In this array drew near the' Athenian town;
When in his pomp, and utmost of his pride,
Marching, he chanc'd to cast his eye aside,
And saw a choir of mourning dames, who lay
By two and two across the common way;
At his approach they rais'd a rueful cry,
And beat their breasts, and held their hands on high,
Creeping, and crying, till they seiz'd at last
His courser's bridle, and his feet embrac'd.

'Tell me,' said Theseus, 'what and whence you are,
And why this funeral pageant you prepare?
Is this the welcome of my worthy deeds,
To meet my triumph in ill-omen'd weeds?
Or envy you my praise, and would destroy
With grief my pleasures, and pollute my joy?

Or are you injur'd, and demand relief?
Name your request, and I will ease your grief.'

The most in years of all the mourning train
Began, (but swooned first away for pain);
Then scarce recover'd, spoke: 'Nor envy we
Thy great renown, nor grudge thy victory;
'Tis thine, O king! the' afflicted to redress,
And fame has fill'd the world with thy success:
We, wretched women, sue for that alone
Which of thy goodness is refus'd to none:
Let fall some drops of pity on our grief,
If what we beg be just, and we deserve relief:
For none of us, who now thy grace implore,
But held the rank of sovereign-queen before;
Till thanks to giddy chance, which never bears
That mortal bliss should last for length of years,
She cast us headlong from our high estate,
And here in hope of thy return we wait;
And long have waited in the temple nigh,
Built to the gracious goddess Clemency.
But reverence thou the pow'r, whose name it bears,
Relieve the' oppress'd, and wipe the widow's tears;
I, wretched I, have other fortune seen,
The wife of Capaneus, and once a queen:
At Thebes he fell; curs'd be the fatal day!
And all the rest thou seest in this array,
To make their moan, their lords in battle lost
Before that town besieg'd by our confederate host:
But Creon, old and impious, who commands
The Theban city, and usurps the lands,
Denies the rites of funeral fires to those
Whose breathless bodies yet he calls his foes.

Unburn'd, unburied, on a heap they lie;
Such is their fate, and such his tyranny;
No friend has leave to bear away the dead,
But with their lifeless limbs his hounds are fed.'
At this she shriek'd aloud; the mournful train
Echo'd her grief, and grovelling on the plain,
With groans, and hands upheld, to move his mind,
Besought his pity to their helpless kind!

The prince was touch'd, his tears began to flow,
And, as his tender heart would break in two,
He sigh'd; and could not but their fate deplore,
So wretched now, so fortunate before.
Then lightly from his lofty steed he flew,
And raising one by one the suppliant crew,
To comfort each, full solemnly he swore,
That by the faith which knights to knighthood bore,
And whate'er else to chivalry belongs,
He would not cease, till he reveng'd their wrongs.
That Greece should see perform'd, what he declar'd;
And cruel Creon find his just reward.
He said no more, but shunning all delay,
Rode on; nor enter'd Athens on his way:
But left his sister and his queen behind;
And wav'd his royal banner in the wind;
Where in an argent field the god of war
Was drawn triumphant on his iron car;
Red was his sword and shield, and whole attire,
And all the godhead seem'd to glow with fire;
Ev'n the ground glitter'd where the standard flew,
And the green grass was dy'd to sanguine hue.
High on his pointed lance his pennon bore
His Cretan fight, the conquer'd Minotaure:

The soldiers shout around with generous rage,
And in that victory their own presage.
He prais'd their ardour: inly pleas'd to see
His host, the flow'r of Grecian chivalry.
All day he march'd, and all the' ensuing night,
And saw the city with returning light.
The process of the war I need not tell,—
How Theseus conquer'd and how Creon fell:
Or after, how by storm the walls were won,
Or how the victor sack'd and burn'd the town:
How to the ladies he restor'd again
The bodies of their lords in battle slain:
And with what ancient rites they were inter'd;
All these to fitter time shall be defer'd.
I spare the widows' tears, their woeful cries,
And howling at their husbands' obsequies;
How Theseus at these funerals did assist,
And with what gifts the mourning dames dismiss'd.

Thus when the victor-chief had Creon slain,
And conquer'd Thebes, he pitch'd upon the plain
His mighty camp, and when the day return'd,
The country wasted, and the hamlets burn'd;
And left the pillagers, to rapine bred,
Without control to strip and spoil the dead.

There, in a heap of slain, among the rest [press'd
Two youthful knights they found beneath a load op-
Of slaughter'd foes, whom first to death they sent,
The trophies of their strength, a bloody monument.
Both fair, and both of royal blood they seem'd,
Whom kinsmen to the crown the heralds deem'd;
That day in equal arms they fought for fame; [same.
Their swords, their shields, their surcoats were the

Close by each other laid they press'd the ground;
Their manly bosoms pierc'd with many a grisly wound;
Nor well alive nor wholly dead they were,
But some faint signs of feeble life appear:
The wandering breath was on the wing to part,
Weak was the pulse, and hardly heav'd the heart.
These two were sisters' sons; and Arcite one,
Much fam'd in fields, with valiant Palamon.
From these their costly arms the spoilers rent,
And softly both convey'd to Theseus' tent;
Whom known of Creon's line, and cur'd with care,
He to his city sent, as prisoners of the war,
Hopeless of ransom, and condemn'd to lie
In durance, doom'd a lingering death to die.

This done, he march'd away with warlike sound,
And to his Athens turn'd with laurels crown'd,
Where happy long he liv'd, much lov'd, and more renown'd.
But in a tower, and never to be loos'd,
The woeful captive kinsmen are inclos'd.

Thus year by year they pass, and day by day,
Till once ('twas on the morn of cheerful May)
The young Emilia, fairer to be seen
Than the fair lily on the flowery green,
More fresh than May herself in blossoms new,
(For with the rosy colour strove her hue)
Wak'd, as her custom was, before the day,
To do the' observance due to sprightly May;
For sprightly May commands our youth to keep
The vigils of her night, and break their sluggard sleep.

Each gentle breast, with kindly warmth she moves,
Inspires new flames, revives extinguish'd loves;
In this remembrance Emily ere day
Arose, and dress'd herself in rich array;
Fresh as the month, and as the morning fair:
Adown her shoulders fell her length of hair:
A ribband did the braided tresses bind;
The rest was loose, and wanton'd in the wind.
Aurora had but newly chas'd the night,
And purpled o'er the sky with blushing light,
When to the garden-walk she took her way,
To sport and trip along in cool of day,
And offer maiden vows in honour of the May.

At every turn she made a little stand,
And thrust among the thorns her lily hand
To draw the rose, and every rose she drew
She shook the stalk, and brush'd away the dew:
Then party-colour'd flowers of white and red
She wove, to make a garland for her head:
This done, she sung and caroll'd out so clear,
That men and angels might rejoice to hear,
Ev'n wondering Philomel forgot to sing;
And learn'd from her to welcome in the Spring.
The tower, of which before was mention made,
Within whose keep the captive knights were laid,
Built of a large extent, and strong withal,
Was one partition of the palace-wall:
The garden was enclos'd, within the square,
Where young Emilia took the morning air.

It happen'd, Palamon, the prisoner knight,
Restless for woe, arose before the light,

And, with his jailor's leave, desir'd to breathe
An air more wholesome than the damps beneath.
This granted; to the tower he took his way,
Cheer'd with the promise of a glorious day:
Then cast a languishing regard around,
And saw with hateful eyes the temples crown'd
With golden spires, and all the hostile ground.
He sigh'd, and turn'd his eyes, because he knew
'Twas but a larger jail he had in view:
Then look'd below, and from the castle's height
Beheld a nearer and more pleasing sight:
The garden, which before he had not seen,
In spring's new livery clad of white and green,
Fresh flowers in wide parterres, and shady walks between.
This view'd, but not enjoy'd, with arms across
He stood, reflecting on his country's loss;
Himself an object of the public scorn,
And often wish'd he never had been born.
At last (for so his destiny requir'd)
With walking giddy, and with thinking tir'd,
He through a little window cast his sight,
Though thick of bars, that gave a scanty light:
But ev'n that glimmering serv'd him to descry
The' inevitable charms of Emily.

Scarce had he seen, but seiz'd with sudden smart,
Stung to the quick, he felt it at his heart;
Struck blind with overpowering light he stood,
Then started back amaz'd, and cried aloud!

Young Arcite heard; and up he ran with haste
To help his friend, and in his arms embrac'd:

And ask'd him why he look'd so deadly wan,
And whence, and how his change of cheer began?
Or who had done the' offence? 'But if,' said he,
'Your grief alone is hard captivity;
For love of Heaven, with patience undergo
A cureless ill, since fate will have it so:
So stood our horoscope in chains to lie,
And Saturn, in the dungeon of the sky,
Or other baleful aspect, rul'd our birth,
When all the friendly stars were under earth:
Whate'er betides, by destiny 'tis done,
And better bear like men, than vainly seek to shun.'
'Nor of my bonds,' said Palamon again,
'Nor of unhappy planets I complain;
But when my mortal anguish caus'd my cry,
That moment I was hurt through either eye;
Pierc'd with a random shaft, I faint away,
And perish with insensible decay:
A glance of some new goddess gave the wound,
Whom, like Actæon, unaware I found.
Look how she walks along yon shady space,
Not Juno moves with more majestic grace;
And all the Cyprian Queen is in her face.
If thou art Venus, (for thy charms confess
That face was form'd in Heaven) nor art thou less;
Disguis'd in habit, undisguis'd in shape,
O help us captives from our chains to 'scape!
But if our doom be past, in bonds to lie
For life, and in a loathsome dungeon die,
Then be thy wrath appeas'd with our disgrace,
And show compassion to the Theban race,
Oppress'd by tyrant power!' While yet he spoke,
Arcite on Emily had fix'd his look;

The fatal dart a ready passage found,
And deep within his heart infix'd the wound:
So that if Palamon were wounded sore,
Arcite was hurt as much as he or more:
Then from his inmost soul he sigh'd, and said,
'The beauty I behold has struck me dead:
Unknowingly she strikes, and kills by chance;
Poison is in her eyes, and death in every glance.
O! I must ask; nor ask alone, but move
Her mind to mercy, or must die for love!'

Thus Arcite: and thus Palamon replies,
(Eager his tone, and ardent were his eyes:)
'Speak'st thou in earnest, or in jesting vein?'
'Jesting,' said Arcite, 'suits but ill with pain.'
'It suits far worse,' said Palamon again,
And bent his brows, 'with men who honour weigh,
Their faith to break, their friendship to betray;
But worst with thee, of noble lineage born,
My kinsman, and in arms my brother sworn.
Have we not plighted each our holy oath,
That one should be the common good of both?
One soul should both inspire, and neither prove
His fellow's hindrance in pursuit of love?
To this before the gods we gave our hands,
And nothing but our death can break the bands.
This binds thee, then, to further my design;
As I am bound by vow to further thine;
Nor canst, nor dar'st thou, traitor, on the plain
Appeach my honour, or thy own maintain;
Since thou art of my council, and the friend
Whose faith I trust, and on whose care depend:
And would'st thou court my lady's love, which I
Much rather than release, would choose to die?

But thou, false Arcite, never shalt obtain
Thy bad pretence; I told thee first my pain:
For first my love began ere thine was born;
Thou, as my council, and my brother sworn,
Art bound to' assist my eldership of right,
Or justly to be deem'd a perjur'd knight.'

Thus Palamon. But Arcite, with disdain,
In haughty language thus replied again:
'Forsworn thyself; the traitor's odious name
I first return, and then disprove thy claim.
If love be passion, and that passion nurs'd
With strong desires, I lov'd the lady first.
Canst thou pretend desire, whom zeal inflam'd
To worship, and a power celestial nam'd?
Thine was devotion to the bless'd above,
I saw the woman, and desir'd her love;
First own'd my passion, and to thee commend
The' important secret, as my chosen friend.
Suppose, (which yet I grant not) thy desire
A moment elder than my rival fire;
Can chance of seeing first thy title prove?
And know'st thou not, no law is made for love?
Law is to things which to free choice relate;
Love is not in our choice, but in our fate;
Laws are but positive: Love's power, we see,
Is Nature's sanction, and her first decree.
Each day we break the bond of human laws
For love, and vindicate the common cause.
Laws for defence of civil rights are plac'd,
Love throws the fences down, and makes a general waste:
Maids, widows, wives, without distinction fall;
The sweeping deluge, Love, comes on and covers all.

If then the laws of friendship I transgress,
I keep the greater, while I break the less;
And both are mad alike, since neither can possess.
Both hopeless to be ransom'd, never more
To see the sun, but as he passes o'er.'

Like Æsop's hounds contending for the bone,
Each pleaded right, and would be lord alone:
The fruitless fight continued all the day;
A cur came by, and snatch'd the prize away:
As courtiers therefore justle for a grant, [want,
And when they break their friendship, plead their
'So thou, if fortune will thy suit advance,
Love on: nor envy me my equal chance:
For I must love, and am resolv'd to try
My fate, or, failing in the' adventure, die!'

Great was their strife, which hourly was renew'd,
Till each with mortal hate his rival view'd:
Now friends no more, nor walking hand in hand;
But when they met, they made a surly stand;
And glar'd like angry lions as they pass'd;
And wish'd that every look might be their last.

It chanc'd, at length, Pirithous came, to' attend
This worthy Theseus, his familiar friend:
Their love in early infancy began,
And rose as childhood ripen'd into man.
Companions of the war; and lov'd so well,
That when one died, as ancient stories tell,
His fellow, to redeem him, went to hell.

But to pursue my tale; to welcome home
His warlike brother is Pirithous come:

Arcite of Thebes was known in arms long since,
And honour'd by this young Thessalian prince.
Theseus, to gratify his friend and guest,
Who made our Arcite's freedom his request,
Restor'd to liberty the captive knight,
But on these hard conditions I recite:
That if hereafter Arcite should be found
Within the compass of Athenian ground,
By day or night, or on whate'er pretence,
His head should pay the forfeit of the' offence.
To this, Pirithous, for his friend, agreed,
And on his promise was the prisoner freed.

Unpleas'd and pensive, hence he takes his way,
At his own peril; for his life must pay.
Who now but Arcite mourns his bitter fate,
Finds his dear purchase, and repents too late?
'What have I gain'd,' he said, 'in prison pent,
If I but change my bonds for banishment?
And banish'd from her sight, I suffer more
In freedom, than I felt in bonds before;
Forc'd from her presence, and condemn'd to live:
Unwelcome freedom, and unthank'd reprieve:
Heaven is not but where Emily abides,
And where she's absent, all is hell besides.
Next to my day of birth, was that accurst
Which bound my friendship to Pirithous first:
Had I not known that Prince, I still had been
In bondage, and had still Emilia seen:
For though I never can her grace deserve,
'Tis recompense enough to see and serve.
O Palamon, my kinsman and my friend,
How much more happy fates thy love attend

Thine is the' adventure; thine the victory:
Well has thy fortune turn'd the dice for thee:
Thou on that angel's face may'st feed thy eyes,
In prison, no; but blissful paradise!
Thou daily seest that sun of beauty shine,
And lov'st at least in love's extremest line.
I mourn in absence, love's eternal night:
And who can tell but since thou hast her sight,
And art a comely, young, and valiant knight,
Fortune (a various power) may cease to frown,
And by some ways unknown thy wishes crown?
But I, the most forlorn of human kind,
Nor help can hope, nor remedy can find;
But doom'd to drag my loathsome life in care,
For my reward, must end it in despair.
Fire, water, air, and earth, and force of fates
That governs all, and Heaven that all creates,
Nor art, nor nature's hand, can ease my grief;
Nothing but death, the wretch's last relief:
Then farewell youth, and all the joys that dwell
With youth and life, and life itself, farewell!'

But why, alas! do mortal men in vain
Of fortune, fate, or Providence complain?
God gives us what he knows our wants require,
And better things than those which we desire:
Some pray for riches; riches they obtain;
But watch'd by robbers, for their wealth are slain:
Some pray from prison to be freed; and come,
When guilty of their vows, to fall at home;
Murder'd by those they trusted with their life,
A favour'd servant, or a bosom wife.
Such dear-bought blessings happen every day,
Because we know not for what things to pray;

Like drunken sots about the streets we roam:
Well knows the sot he has a certain home,
Yet knows not how to find the' uncertain place
And blunders on, and staggers every pace.
Thus all seek happiness; but few can find,
For far the greater part of men are blind.
This is my case, who thought our utmost good
Was in one word of freedom understood:
The fatal blessing came: from prison free,
I starve abroad, and lose the sight of Emily!'

Thus Arcite; but if Arcite thus deplore
His sufferings, Palamon yet suffers more.
For when he knew his rival freed and gone,
He swells with wrath; he makes outrageous moan:
He frets, he fumes, he stares, he stamps the ground;
The hollow tower with clamours rings around:
With briny tears he bath'd his fetter'd feet,
And drop'd all o'er with agony of sweat.
'Alas!' he cried, 'I wretch in prison pine,
Too happy rival, while the fruit is thine:
Thou liv'st at large, thou draw'st thy native air,
Pleas'd with thy freedom, proud of my despair:
Thou may'st, since thou hast youth and courage join'd,
A sweet behaviour, and a solid mind,
Assemble ours, and all the Theban race,
To vindicate on Athens thy disgrace:
And after (by some treaty made) possess
Fair Emily, the pledge of lasting peace:
So thine shall be the beauteous prize; while I
Must languish in despair, in prison die,
Thus all the' advantage of the strife is thine,
Thy portion double joys, and double sorrows mine.

The rage of jealousy then fir'd his soul,
And his face kindled like a burning coal:
Now cold despair, succeeding in its stead,
To livid paleness turns the glowing red.
His blood, scarce liquid, creeps within his veins,
Like water which the freezing wind constrains.
Then thus he said:—'Eternal deities!
Who rule the world with absolute decrees,
And write, whatever time shall bring to pass,
With pens of adamant on plates of brass;
What, is the race of human kind your care,
Beyond what all his fellow-creatures are?
He, with the rest, is liable to pain;
And, like the sheep, his brother beast, is slain.
Cold, hunger, prisons, ills without a cure,
All these he must, and guiltless oft, endure:
Or does your justice, power, or prescience fail,
When the good suffer, and the bad prevail?
What worse to wretched virtue could befal,
If fate or giddy fortune govern'd all?
Nay, worse than other beasts is our estate;
Them, to pursue their pleasures, you create:
We, bound by harder laws, must curb our will,
And your commands, not our desires, fulfil:
Then, when the creature is unjustly slain,
Yet, after death at least, he feels no pain;
But man, in life surcharg'd with woe before,
Not freed, when dead, is doom'd to suffer more.
A serpent shoots his sting at unaware;
An ambush'd thief forelays a traveller:
The man lies murder'd, while the thief and snake,
One gains the thickets, and one thrids the brake

This let divines decide; but well I know,
Just, or unjust, I have my share of woe,
Through Saturn, seated in a luckless place,
And Juno's wrath, that persecutes my race;
Or Mars and Venus, in a quartile, move
My pangs of jealousy for Arcite's love!'

Let Palamon, oppress'd in bondage, mourn,
While to his exil'd rival we return.
By this the sun, declining from his height,
The day had shorten'd to prolong the night:
The lengthen'd night gave length of misery
Both to the captive lover and the free.
For Palamon, in endless prison mourns,
And Arcite forfeits life if he returns.
The banish'd never hopes his love to see,
Nor hopes the captive lord his liberty.
'Tis hard to say, who suffers greater pains;
One sees his love, but cannot break his chains;
One free, and all his motions uncontrol'd,
Beholds whate'er he would, but what he would
behold.
Judge as you please, for I will haste to tell
What fortune to the banish'd knight befel.—
When Arcite was to Thebes return'd again,
The loss of her he lov'd renew'd his pain;
What could be worse, than never more to see
His life, his soul, his charming Emily?
He rav'd with all the madness of despair,
He roar'd, he beat his breast, he tore his hair.
Dry sorrow in his stupid eyes appears,
For wanting nourishment, he wanted tears:
His eye-balls in their hollow sockets sink,
Bereft of sleep, he loaths his meat and drink.

He withers at his heart, and looks as wan
As the pale spectre of a murder'd man;
That pale turns yellow, and his face receives
The faded hue of sapless boxen leaves:
In solitary groves he makes his moan,
Walks early out, and ever is alone.
Nor mix'd in mirth, in youthful pleasure shares,
But sighs, when songs and instruments he hears:
His spirits are so low, his voice is drown'd,
He hears as from afar, or in a swoon,
Like the deaf murmurs of a distant sound:
Uncomb'd his locks, and squallid his attire,
Unlike the trim of love and gay desire;
But full of museful mopings, which presage
The loss of reason, and conclude in rage.

This, when he had endur'd a year or more,
Now wholly chang'd from what he was before,
It happen'd once, that slumbering as he lay,
He dreamt (his dream began at break of day)
That Hermes o'er his head in air appear'd,
And with soft words his drooping spirits cheer'd:
His hat, adorn'd with wings, disclos'd the god,
And in his hand he bore the sleep-compelling rod:
Such as he seem'd, when at his sire's command
On Argus' head he laid the snaky wand.
'Arise!' he said, to conquering Athens go;
There fate appoints an end of all thy woe!'
The fright awaken'd Arcite with a start,
Against his bosom bounc'd his heaving heart;
But soon he said, with scarce recover'd breath,
'And thither will I go, to meet my death,
Sure to be slain; but death is my desire,
Since in Emilia's sight I shall expire!'

By chance he spied a mirror while he spoke,
And, gazing there, beheld his alter'd look:
Wondering, he saw his features and his hue
So much were chang'd, that scarce himself he knew.
A sudden thought then starting in his mind;
'Since I in Arcite cannot Arcite find,
The world may search in vain with all their eyes,
But never penetrate through this disguise.
Thanks to the change which grief and sickness give,
In low estate I may securely live,
And see, unknown, my mistress day by day.'
He said; and cloth'd himself in coarse array:
A labouring hind in show; then forth he went,
And to the' Athenian towers his journey bent:
One squire attended, in the same disguise,
Made conscious of his master's enterprise.
Arriv'd at Athens, soon he came to court,
Unknown, unquestion'd, in that thick resort;
Proffering for hire his service at the gate,
To drudge, draw water, and to run or wait.

So fair befel him, that for little gain
He serv'd at first Emilia's chamberlain;
And watchful all advantages to spy,
Was still at hand, and in his master's eye;
And as his bones were big, and sinews strong,
Refus'd no toil that could to slaves belong:
But from deep wells with engines water drew,
And us'd his noble hands the wood to hew.
He pass'd a year at least, attending thus
On Emily, and call'd Philostratus.
But never was there man of his degree
So much esteem'd, so well belov'd as he.

So gentle of condition was he known,
That through the court his courtesy was blown:
All think him worthy of a greater place,
And recommend him to the royal grace;
That exercis'd within a higher sphere,
His virtues more conspicuous might appear.
Thus, by the general voice, was Arcite prais'd,
And by great Theseus to high favour rais'd;
Among his menial servants first enroll'd,
And largely entertain'd with sums of gold:
Besides what secretly from Thebes was sent,
Of his own income, and his annual rent;
This well employ'd, he purchas'd friends and fame,
But cautiously conceal'd from whence it came.
Thus, for three years, he liv'd with large increase,
In arms, of honour; and esteem, in peace;
To Theseus' person he was ever near,
And Theseus, for his virtues, held him dear.

PALAMON AND ARCITE:

OR,

THE KNIGHT'S TALE.

FROM CHAUCER.

BOOK II.

PALAMON AND ARCITE;

OR,

THE KNIGHT'S TALE.

BOOK II.

While Arcite lives in bliss, the story turns
Where hopeless Palamon in prison mourns.
For six long years immur'd, the captive knight
Had drag'd his chains, and scarcely seen the light:
Lost liberty and love at once he bore;
His prison pain'd him much, his passion more:
Nor dares he hope his fetters to remove,
Nor ever wishes to be free from love.
But when the sixth revolving year was run,
And May, within the Twins, receiv'd the sun;
Were it by chance, or forceful destiny,
Which forms in causes first whate'er shall be,
Assisted by a friend, one moonless night,
This Palamon from prison took his flight:
A pleasant beverage he prepar'd before,
Of wine and honey mix'd, with added store
Of opium; to his keeper this he brought,
Who swallow'd, unaware, the sleepy draught,
And snor'd secure till morn; his senses bound
In slumber, and in long oblivion drown'd.
Short was the night, and careful Palamon
Sought the next covert ere the rising sun.

A thick-spread forest near the city lay,
To this, with lengthen'd strides, he took his way,
(For far he could not fly, and fear'd the day.)
Safe from pursuit, he meant to shun the light,
Till the brown shadows of the friendly night
To Thebes might favour his intended flight.
When to his country come, his next design
Was all the Theban race in arms to join,
And war on Theseus, till he lost his life,
Or won the beauteous Emily to wife.
Thus, while his thoughts the lingering day beguile,
To gentle Arcite let us turn our style;
Who little dreamt how nigh he was to care,
Till treacherous fortune caught him in the snare.
The morning lark, the messenger of day,
Saluted in her song the morning gray;
And soon the sun arose, with beams so bright,
That all the' horizon laugh'd to see the joyous sight:
He, with his tepid rays, the rose renews,
And licks the drooping leaves, and dries the dews;
When Arcite left his bed, resolv'd to pay
Observance to the month of merry May;
Forth on his fiery steed betimes he rode,
That scarcely prints the turf on which he trod:
At ease he seem'd, and prancing o'er the plains,
Turn'd only to the grove his horse's reins,
The grove I nam'd before; and lighted there,
A woodbine-garland sought to crown his hair;
Then turn'd his face against the rising day,
And rais'd his voice to welcome in the May:—

'For thee, sweet month, the groves green liveries
If not the first, the fairest of the year: [wear:

For thee the Graces lead the dancing Hours,
And Nature's ready pencil paints the flowers:
When thy short reign is past, the feverish sun
The sultry tropic fears, and moves more slowly on.
So may thy tender blossoms fear no blight,
Nor goats, with venom'd teeth, thy tendrils bite,
As thou shalt guide my wandering feet to find
The fragrant greens I seek, my brows to bind.'

His vows address'd, within the grove he stray'd,
Till fate, or fortune, near the place convey'd
His steps where secret Palamon was laid.
Full little thought of him the gentle knight,
Who, flying death, had there conceal'd his flight,
In brakes and brambles hid, and shunning mortal sight;
And less he knew him for his hated foe,
But fear'd him as a man he did not know.
But as it has been said of ancient years,
That fields are full of eyes, and woods have ears;
For this the wise are ever on their guard,
For, unforeseen (they say) is unprepar'd.
Uncautious Arcite thought himself alone,
And, less than all, suspected Palamon;
Who, listening, heard him, while he search'd the grove,
And loudly sung his roundelay of love.
But on the sudden stopp'd, and silent stood,
(As lovers often muse and change their mood;
Now high as heaven, and then as low as hell;
Now up, now down, as buckets in a well:
For Venus, like her day, will change her cheer,
And seldom shall we see a Friday clear.)
Thus Arcite having sung, with alter'd hue
Sunk on the ground, and from his bosom drew

A desperate sigh, accusing heaven and fate,
And angry Juno's unrelenting hate:—
'Curs'd be the day when first I did appear;
Let it be blotted from the calendar,
Lest it pollute the month, and poison all the year.
Still will the jealous queen pursue our race?
Cadmus is dead, the Theban city was:
Yet ceases not her hate: for all who come
From Cadmus, are involv'd in Cadmus' doom.
I suffer for my blood: unjust decree!
That punishes another's crime on me.
In mean estate I serve my mortal foe,
The man who caus'd my country's overthrow.
This is not all; for Juno, to my shame,
Has forc'd me to forsake my former name!
Arcite I was, Philostratus I am.
That side of heaven is all my enemy:
Mars ruin'd Thebes: his mother ruin'd me.
Of all the royal race remains but one
Beside myself, the' unhappy Palamon,
Whom Theseus holds in bonds, and will not free;
Without a crime, except his kin to me.
Yet these, and all the rest, I could endure;
But love's a malady without a cure:
Fierce love has pierc'd me with his fiery dart,
He fires within, and hisses at my heart.
Your eyes, fair Emily, my fate pursue;
I suffer for the rest, I die for you.
Of such a goddess no time leaves record,
Who burn'd the temple where she was ador'd:
And let it burn, I never will complain,
Pleas'd with my sufferings, if you knew my pain.'

At this a sickly qualm his heart assail'd,
His ears ring inward, and his senses fail'd.

No word miss'd Palamon of all he spoke,
But soon to deadly pale he chang'd his look:
He trembled every limb, and felt a smart,
As if cold steel had glided through his heart;
Nor longer staid, but starting from his place,
Discover'd stood, and show'd his hostile face:
'False traitor, Arcite! traitor to thy blood,
Bound by thy sacred oath to seek my good,
Now art thou found forsworn, for Emily;
And dar'st attempt her love, for whom I die.
So hast thou cheated Theseus with a wile,
Against thy vow, returning to beguile
Under a borrow'd name: as false to me,
So false thou art to him who set thee free:
But rest assur'd, that either thou shalt die,
Or else renounce thy claim in Emily:
For though unarm'd I am, and (freed by chance)
Am here without my sword, or pointed lance:
Hope not, base man, unquestion'd hence to go,
For I am Palamon, thy mortal foe.'

Arcite, who heard this tale, and knew the man,
His sword unsheath'd, and fiercely thus began:
'Now, by the gods, who govern Heaven above!
Wert thou not weak with hunger, mad with love,
That word had been thy last; or in this grove
This hand should force thee to renounce thy love.
The surety which I gave thee, I defy;
Fool, not to know that love endures no tie;
And Jove but laughs at lovers' perjury.
Know, I will serve thee fair in thy despite;
But since thou art my kinsman, and a knight,
Here, have my faith; to-morrow, in this grove,
Our arms shall plead the titles of our love:

And Heaven so help my right, as I alone
Will come, and keep the cause and quarrel both
unknown;
With arms of proof both for myself and thee;
Choose thou the best, and leave the worst to me.
And, that at better ease thou may'st abide,
Bedding and clothes I will this night provide,
And needful sustenance, that thou may'st be
A conquest better won, and worthy me.'
His promise Palamon accepts; but pray'd,
To keep it better than the first he made.
Thus fair they parted till the morrow's dawn;
For each had laid his plighted faith to pawn.
Oh love! thou sternly dost thy power maintain,
And wilt not bear a rival in thy reign;
Tyrants and thou all fellowship disdain.
This was in Arcite prov'd and Palamon,
Both in despair, yet each would love alone.
Arcite return'd, and, as in honour tied,
His foe with bedding and with food supplied;
Then, ere the day, two suits of armour sought,
Which, borne before him, on his steed he brought:
Both were of shining steel, and wrought so pure,
As might the strokes of two such arms endure.
Now, at the time, and in the' appointed place,
The challenger and challeng'd, face to face,
Approach; each other from afar they knew,
And from afar their hatred chang'd their hue.
So stands the Thracian herdsman with his spear,
Full in the gap, and hopes the hunted bear,
And hears him rustling in the wood, and sees
His course at distance by the bending trees;
And thinks, here comes my mortal enemy,
And either he must fall in fight, or I:

This, while he thinks, he lifts aloft his dart;
A generous chillness seizes every part; [heart.
The veins pour back the blood, and fortify the

Thus pale they meet; their eyes with fury burn;
None greets; for none the greeting will return:
But in dumb surliness, each arm'd with care
His foe profess'd, as brother of the war;
Then both, no moment lost, at once advance
Against each other, arm'd with sword and lance:
They lash, they foin, they pass, they strive to bore
Their corslets, and the thinnest parts explore.
Thus, two long hours, in equal arms they stood,
And wounded, wound; till both were bath'd in
And not a foot of ground had either got, [blood;
As if the world depended on the spot.
Fell Arcite like an angry tiger far'd,
And like a lion Palamon appear'd:
Or as two boars whom love to battle draws,
With rising bristles, and with frothy jaws;
Their adverse breasts with tusks oblique they wound,
With grunts and groans the forest rings around:
So fought the knights, and fighting must abide,
Till fate an umpire sends their difference to decide.
The power that ministers to God's decrees,
And executes on earth what Heaven foresees,
Call'd providence, or chance, or fatal sway,
Comes with resistless force, and finds or makes her
Nor kings, nor nations, nor united pow'r, [way.
One moment can retard the' appointed hour:
And some one day, some wondrous chance appears,
Which happen'd not in centuries of years:
For sure, whate'er we mortals hate or love,
Or hope or fear, depends on powers above;

They move our appetites to good or ill,
And by foresight necessitate the will,
In Theseus this appears; whose youthful joy
Was beasts of chase in forests to destroy:
This gentle knight, inspir'd by jolly May,
Forsook his easy couch at early day,
And to the woods and wilds pursued his way.
Beside him rode Hippolita, the queen,
And Emily, attir'd in lively green,
With horns, and hounds, and all the tuneful cry,
To hunt a royal hart within the covert nigh:
And as he follow'd Mars before, so now
He serves the goddess of the silver bow.
The way that Theseus took was to the wood,
Where the two knights in cruel battle stood:
The land on which they fought, the' appointed place
In which the' uncoupled hounds began the chase.
Thither forth-right he rode to rouse the prey,
That shaded by the fern in harbour lay;
And thence dislodg'd, was wont to leave the wood,
For open fields, and cross the crystal flood.
Approach'd, and looking underneath the sun,
He saw proud Arcite and fierce Palamon
In mortal battle, doubling blow on blow;
Like lightning flam'd their falchions to and fro,
And shot a dreadful gleam; so strong they struck,
There seem'd less force requir'd to fell an oak.
He gaz'd with wonder on their equal might,
Look'd eager on, but knew not either knight:
Resolv'd to learn, he spur'd his fiery steed
With goring rowels, to provoke his speed.
The minute ended that began the race,
So soon he was betwixt 'em on the place;

And with his sword unsheath'd, on pain of life
Commands both combatants to cease their strife:
Then with imperious tone, pursues his threat,
'What are you? Why in arms together met?
How dares your pride presume against my laws,
As in a listed field to fight your cause,
Unask'd the royal grant; no marshal by,
As knightly rites require; no judge to try?'
Then Palamon, with scarce recover'd breath,
Thus hasty spoke: 'We both deserve the death,
And both would die; for look the world around,
A pair so wretched is not to be found.
Our life's a load; encumber'd with the charge,
We long to set the' imprison'd soul at large.
Now as thou art a sovereign judge, decree
The rightful doom of death to him and me;
Let neither find thy grace; for grace is cruelty.
Me first! O kill me first! and cure my woe;
Then sheathe the sword of justice on my foe:
Or kill him first; for when his name is heard,
He, foremost, will receive his due reward.
Arcite of Thebes is he! thy mortal foe,
On whom thy grace did liberty bestow;
But first contracted, that if ever found
By day or night upon the' Athenian ground,
His head should pay the forfeit: see return'd
The perjur'd knight, his oath and honour scorn'd!
For this is he, who, with a borrow'd name,
And proffer'd service, to thy palace came,
Now call'd Philostratus: retain'd by thee,
A traitor trusted, and in high degree,
Aspiring to the bed of beauteous Emily.
My part remains:—From Thebes my birth I own,
And call myself the' unhappy Palamon.

Think me not like that man; since no disgrace
Can force me to renounce the honour of my race;
Know me for what I am; I broke thy chain,
Nor promis'd I thy prisoner to remain:
The love of liberty with life is giv'n,
And life itself the' inferior gift of Heav'n.
Thus, without crime, I fled; but further know,
I, with this Arcite, am thy mortal foe:
Then give me death, since I thy life pursue,
For safeguard of thyself, death is my due.
More wouldst thou know? I love bright Emily,
And for her sake and in her sight will die:
But kill my rival too; for he no less
Deserves; and I thy righteous doom will bless;
Assur'd, that what I lose, he never shall possess.'
To this replied the stern Athenian prince,
And sourly smil'd, 'In owning your offence
You judge yourself; and I but keep record
In place of law, while you pronounce the word.
Take your desert, the death you have decreed;
I seal your doom, and ratify the deed.
By Mars, the patron of my arms, you die!'

He said: dumb sorrow seiz'd the standers by.
The queen above the rest, by nature good,
(The pattern form'd of perfect womanhood)
For tender pity wept: when she began,
Through the bright quire the' infectious virtue ran.
All drop'd their tears, ev'n the contended maid;
And thus, among themselves, they softly said:
'What eyes can suffer this unworthy sight!
Two youths of royal blood, renown'd in fight,
The mastership of Heaven in face and mind,
And lovers, far beyond their faithless kind:

See their wide streaming wounds; they neither came
For pride of empire, nor desire of fame:
Kings fight for kingdoms, madmen for applause;
But love for love alone; that crowns the lover's
cause!'
This thought, which ever bribes the beauteous kind,
Such pity wrought in every lady's mind,
They left their steeds, and prostrate on the place,
From the fierce king implor'd the' offenders' grace.

He paus'd awhile, stood silent in his mood,
(For yet, his rage was boiling in his blood)
But soon his tender mind the' impression felt,
(As softest metals are not slow to melt,
And pity soonest runs in softest minds:)
Then reasons with himself; and first he finds
His passion cast a mist before his sense,
And either made, or magnified the' offence.
Offence! of what? to whom? Who judg'd the cause?
The prisoner freed himself by nature's laws:
Born free, he sought his right: the man he freed
Was perjur'd, but his love excus'd the deed.
Thus pondering, he look'd under with his eyes,
And saw the womens' tears, and heard their cries;
Which mov'd compassion more: he shook his head,
And softly sighing to himself, he said:—

'Curse on the' unpard'ning prince, whom tears can draw
To no remorse: who rules by lions' law;
And deaf to prayers, by no submission bow'd,
Rends all alike, the penitent and proud:'
At this, with look serene, he rais'd his head,
Reason resum'd her place, and passion fled;
Then thus aloud he spoke: 'The power of love,
In earth, and seas, and air, and Heaven above,

Rules, unresisted, with an awful nod;
By daily miracles declar'd a god:
He blinds the wise, gives eyesight to the blind;
And moulds and stamps anew the lover's mind.
Behold that Arcite, and this Palamon,
Freed from my fetters, and in safety gone;
What hinder'd either, in their native soil,
At ease to reap the harvest of their toil?
But love, their lord, did otherwise ordain,
And brought 'em in their own despite again,
To suffer death deserv'd; for well they know,
'Tis in my power, and I their deadly foe;
The proverb holds, that to be wise and love,
Is hardly granted to the gods above.
See how the madmen bleed: behold the gains
With which their master, Love, rewards their pains.
For seven long years, on duty every day,
Lo! their obedience, and their monarch's pay:
Yet, as in duty bound, they serve him on;
And ask the fools, they think it wisely done:
Nor ease, nor wealth, nor life itself regard,
For 'tis their maxim, love is love's reward!
This is not all; the fair for whom they strove
Nor knew before, nor could suspect their love,
Nor thought, when she beheld the fight from far,
Her beauty was the' occasion of the war.
But sure a general doom on man is pass'd,
And all are fools and lovers, first or last:
This both by others and myself I know,
For I have serv'd their sovereign, long ago:
Oft have been caught within the winding train
Of female snares, and felt the lover's pain,
And learn'd how far the god can human hearts constrain.

To this remembrance, and the prayers of those
Who, for the' offending warriors, interpose,
I give their forfeit lives; on this accord,
To do me homage as their sovereign lord;
And as my vassals, to their utmost might,
Assist my person and assert my right.'
This freely sworn, the knights their grace obtain'd;
Then thus the king his secret thoughts explain'd:
'If wealth, or honour, or a royal race,
Or each, or all, may win a lady's grace,
Then either of you knights may well deserve
A princess born; and such is she you serve:
For Emily is sister to the crown,
And but too well to both her beauty known:
But should you combat till you both were dead,
Two lovers cannot share a single bed:
As therefore both are equal in degree,
The lot of both be left to destiny.
Now hear the' award, and happy may it prove
To her, and him who best deserves her love.
Depart from hence in peace, and free as air,
Search the wide world, and where you please repair;
But on the day when this returning sun
To the same point through every sign has run,
Then each of you his hundred knights shall bring,
In royal lists to fight before the king;
And then, the knight whom fate or happy chance
Shall with his friends to victory advance,
And grace his arms so far in equal fight,
From out the bars to force his opposite,
Or kill, or make him recreant on the plain,
The prize of valour and of love shall gain;
The vanquish'd party shall their claim release,
And the long jars conclude in lasting peace.

The charge be mine to' adorn the chosen ground,
The theatre of war, for champions so renown'd;
And take the patron's place of either knight,
With eyes impartial to behold the fight;
And heaven of me so judge, as I shall judge aright.
If both are satisfied with this accord,
Swear by the laws of knighthood on my sword.'

Who now but Palamon exults with joy?
And ravish'd Arcite seems to touch the sky.
The whole assembled troop was pleas'd as well,
Extol'd the' award, and on their knees they fell,
To bless the gracious king. The knights with leave
Departing from the place, his last commands re-
On Emily with equal ardour look, [ceive;
And from her eyes their inspiration took:
From thence to Thebes' old walls pursue their way,
Each to provide his champions for the day.

It might be deem'd on our historian's part,
Or too much negligence, or want of art;
If he forgot the vast magnificence
Of royal Theseus, and his large expense.
He first enclos'd for lists a level ground,
The whole circumference a mile around:
The form was circular; and all without
A trench was sunk, to moat the place about.
Within, an amphitheatre appear'd,
Rais'd in degrees; to sixty paces rear'd:
That when a man was plac'd in one degree,
Height was allow'd for him above to see.

Eastward was built a gate of marble white;
The like adorn'd the western opposite.

A nobler object than his fabric was,
Rome never saw; nor of so vast a space.
For, rich with spoils of many a conquer'd land,
All arts and artists Theseus could command;
Who sold for hire, or wrought for better fame,
The master-painters and the carvers came.
So rose within the compass of the year
An age's work, a glorious theatre.
Then o'er its eastern gate was rais'd above
A temple sacred to the queen of love;
An altar stood below: on either hand [wand.
A priest, with roses crown'd, who held a myrtle

The dome of Mars was on the gate oppos'd;
And on the north a turret was enclos'd,
Within the wall, of alabaster white
And crimson coral, for the queen of night;
Who takes in silvan sports her chaste delight.

Within these oratories might you see
Rich carvings, portraitures, and imagery:
Where every figure to the life express'd
The godhead's power to whom it was address'd.
In Venus' temple on the sides were seen
The broken slumbers of enamour'd men:
Prayers that e'en spoke, and pity seem'd to call,
And issuing sighs that smok'd along the wall,
Complaints, and hot desires, the lover's hell, [fell:
And scalding tears, that wore a channel where they
And all around were nuptial bonds the ties
Of love's assurance, and a train of lies,
That, made in lust, conclude in perjuries.
Beauty, and youth, and wealth, and luxury,
And sprightly hope, and short-enduring joy;

And soreeries to raise the' infernal powers,
And sigils fram'd in planetary hours;
Expense, and after-thought, and idle eare,
And doubts of motly hue, and dark despair:
Suspieions, and fantastieal surmise,
And Jealousy suffus'd, with jaundiee in her eyes,
Diseolouring all she view'd, in tawny dress'd.
Down-look'd, and with a euekow on her fist.
Oppos'd to her, on t'other side, advanee
The eostly feast, the carol, and the danee,
Minstrels and musie, poetry and play,
And balls by night, and tournaments by day.
All these were painted on the wall, and more;
With aets and monuments of times before:
And others added by prophetie doom,
And lovers yet unborn, and loves to eome:
For there the' Idalian mount, and Citheron,
The eourt of Venus, was in eolours drawn:
Before the palaee-gate, in eareless dress,
And loose array, sat portress Idleness:
There by the fount, Nareissus pin'd alone;
There Sampson was, with wiser Solomon,
And all the mighty names by love undone:
Medea's eharms were there, Cireean feasts,
With bowls that turn'd enamour'd youths to beasts.
Here might be seen, that beauty, wealth, and wit,
And prowess, to the power of love submit':
The spreading snare for all mankind is laid;
And lovers all betray, and are betray'd.
The goddess' self, some noble hand had wrought;
Smiling she seem'd, and full of pleasing thought:
From oeean as she first began to rise,
And smooth'd the ruffled seas, and clear'd the skies;

She trod the brine, all bare below the breast,
And the green waves but ill conceal'd the rest:
A lute she held; and on her head was seen
A wreath of roses red, and myrtles green:
Her turtles fan'd the buxom air above;
And by his mother, stood an infant Love
With wings unfledg'd; his eyes were banded o'er;
His hands a bow, his back a quiver bore,
Supplied with arrows bright and keen, a deadly store.

But in the dome of mighty Mars the red,
With different figures all the sides were spread:
This temple, less in form, with equal grace
Was imitative of the first in Thrace:
For that cold region was the lov'd abode,
And sovereign mansion of the warrior-god.
The landscape was a forest wide and bare,
Where neither beast nor human kind repair:
The fowl, that scent afar, the borders fly,
And shun the bitter blast, and wheel about the sky.
A cake of scurf lies baking on the ground,
And prickly stubs, instead of trees are found;
Or woods, with knots and knares deform'd and old;
Headless the most, and hideous to behold:
A rattling tempest through the branches went,
That stripp'd 'em bare, and one sole way they bent.
Heaven froze above, severe: the clouds congeal,
And through the crystal vault appear'd the standing hail.
Such was the face without; a mountain stood
Threatening from high, and overlook'd the wood.
Beneath the louring brow, and on a bent,
The temple stood of Mars armipotent:
The frame of burnish'd steel, that cast a glare
From far, and seem'd to thaw the freezing air.

A straight long entry to the temple led,
Blind with high walls, and horror over head:
Thence issued such a blast and hollow roar,
As threaten'd from the hinge to heave the door;
In, through that door, a northern light there shone;
'Twas all it had, for windows there were none.
The gate was adamant; eternal frame!
Which hew'd by Mars himself, from Indian quarries came,
The labour of a god; and all along
Tough iron plates were clench'd to make it strong.
A tun about was every pillar there;
A polish'd mirror shone not half so clear.
There saw I how the secret felon wrought,
And treason labouring in the traitor's thought;
And midwife Time the ripen'd plot to murder brought.
There, the red anger dar'd the pallid fear;
Next stood Hypocrisy, with holy leer;
Soft-smiling, and demurely looking down,
But hid the dagger underneath the gown:
The' assassinating wife, the household fiend;
And far the blackest there, the traitor-friend.
On t'other side there stood destruction bare;
Unpunish'd rapine, and a waste of war.
Contest, with sharpen'd knives, in cloisters drawn,
And all with blood bespread the holy lawn.
Loud menaces were heard, and foul disgrace,
And bawling infamy, in language base; [place.
Till sense was lost in sound, and silence fled the
The slayer of himself yet saw I there,
The gore congeal'd was clotted in his hair;
With eyes half clos'd, and gaping mouth he lay,
And grim, as when he breath'd his sullen soul away.

In midst of all the dome, misfortune sate,
And gloomy discontent, and fell debate;
And madness laughing in his ireful mood;
And arm'd complaint on theft; and cries of blood.
There was the murder'd corpse, in covert laid,
And violent death in thousand shapes display'd:
The city to the soldier's rage resign'd:
Successful wars, and poverty behind:
Ships burnt in fight, or forc'd on rocky shores,
And the rash hunter strangled by the boars:
The new-born babe by nurses overlaid;
And the cook caught within the raging fire he made.
All ills of Mars's nature, flame and steel:
The gasping charioteer beneath the wheel
Of his own car; the ruin'd house, that falls
And intercepts her lord betwixt the walls:
The whole division that to Mars pertains,
All trades of death that deal in steel for gains,
Were there: the butcher, armourer, and smith
Who forges sharpen'd falchions, or the scythe.
The scarlet conquest on a tower was plac'd,
With shouts, and soldiers' acclamations grac'd:
A pointed sword hung threatening o'er his head,
Sustain'd but by a slender twine of thread.
There saw I Mars's Ides, the capitol,
The seer in vain foretelling Cæsar's fall,
The last triumvirs, and the wars they move,
And Anthony, who lost the world for love!
These, and a thousand more, the fane adorn;
Their fates were painted ere the men were born;
All copied from the heavens, and ruling force
Of the red star, in his revolving course.
The form of Mars high on a chariot stood,
All sheath'd in arms, and gruffly look'd the god:

Two geomantic figures were display'd
Above his head, a warrior and a maid,*
One when direct, and one when retrograde.
Tir'd with deformities of death, I haste
To the third temple of Diana chaste:
A silvan scene with various greens was drawn,
Shades on the sides, and on the midst a lawn:
The silver Cynthia, with her nymphs around,
Pursued the flying deer, the woods with horns re-
Calista there stood manifest of shame, [sound:
And, turn'd a bear, the northern star became:
Her son was next, and by peculiar grace
In the cold circle held the second place:
The stag Acteon in the stream had spied
The naked huntress, and, for seeing, died:
His hounds, unknowing of his change, pursue
The chase, and their mistaken master slew.
Penelan Daphne too was there to see,
Apollo's love before, and now his tree:
The' adjoining fane the' assembled Greeks express'd
And hunting of the Calydonian beast;
Œnides' valour, and his envied prize;
The fatal power of Atalanta's eyes;
Diana's vengeance on the victor shown,
The murdress mother, and consuming son;
The Volscian queen extended on the plain;
The treason punish'd, and the traitor slain.
The rest were various huntings, well design'd,
And savage beasts destroy'd, of every kind.
The graceful goddess was array'd in green;
About her feet were little beagles seen,
That watch'd with upward eyes the motions of
their queen.

* Rubeus and Puella.

Her legs were buskin'd, and the left before,
In act to shoot; a silver bow she bore,
And at her back a painted quiver wore.
She trod a waxing moon, that soon would wane,
And drinking borrow'd light, be fill'd again:
With downcast eyes, as seeming to survey
The dark dominions, her alternate sway.
Before her stood a woman in her throes,
And called Lucina's aid, her burden to disclose.
All these the painter drew with such command,
That Nature snatch'd the pencil from his hand;
Asham'd and angry, that his art could feign
And mend the tortures of a mother's pain.
Theseus beheld the fanes of every god,
And thought his mighty cost was well bestow'd.
So princes now their poets should regard;
But few can write, and fewer can reward.

The theatre thus rais'd, the lists enclos'd,
And all with vast magnificence dispos'd,
We leave the monarch pleas'd; and haste to bring
The knights to combat; and their arms to sing.

PALAMON AND ARCITE;

OR,

THE KNIGHT'S TALE.

BOOK III.

PALAMON AND ARCITE;

OR,

THE KNIGHT'S TALE.

BOOK III.

The day approach'd when fortune should decide
The' important enterprise, and give the bride;
For now, the rivals round the world had sought,
And each his number, well appointed, brought.
The nations far and near contend in choice,
And send the flower of war by public voice;
That after, or before, were never known
Such chiefs; as each an army seem'd alone.
Beside the champions, all of high degree,
Who knighthood lov'd, and deeds of chivalry,
Throng'd to the lists, and envied to behold
The names of others, not their own enroll'd.
Nor seems it strange; for every noble knight,
Who loves the fair, and is endued with might,
In such a quarrel would be proud to fight.
There breathes not scarce a man on British ground
(An isle for love and arms of old renown'd)
But would have sold his life to purchase fame,
To Palamon or Arcite sent his name:
And had the land selected of the best, [the rest,
Half had come hence, and let the world provide
A hundred knights with Palamon there came,
Approv'd in fight, and men of mighty name;

Their arms were several, as their nations were,
But furnish'd all alike with sword and spear.
Some wore coat-armour, imitating seale;
And next their skins were stubborn shirts of mail.
Some wore a breast-plate and a light juppon,*
Their horses cloth'd with rich caparison:
Some for defence would leathern bucklers use,
Of folded hides; and others, shields of Pruce.†
One hung a poleaxe at his saddle-bow.
And one a heavy mace, to stun the foe:
One for his legs and knees provided well,
With jambeux arm'd, and double plates of steel:
This on his helmet wore a lady's glove,
And that, a sleeve embroider'd by his love.

With Palamon, above the rest in place,
Lycurgus came, the surly king of Thrace;
Black was his beard, and manly was his face:
The balls of his broad eyes roll'd in his head,
And glar'd betwixt a yellow and a red:
He look'd a lion with a gloomy stare,
And o'er his eyebrows hung his matted hair:
Big-bon'd, and large of limbs, with sinews strong,
Broad-shoulder'd, and his arms were round and long.
Four milk-white bulls (the Thracian use of old)
Were yok'd to draw his car of burnish'd gold.
Upright he stood, and bore aloft his shield,
Conspicuous from afar, and overlook'd the field.
His surcoat was a bear-skin on his back;
His hair hung long behind, and glossy raven-black.
His ample forehead bore a coronet,
With sparkling diamonds and with rubies set:

* A close coat. † Prussian leather.

Ten brace, and more, of greyhounds, snowy fair,
And tall as stags, ran loose, and cours'd around his chair;
A match for pards in flight, in grappling for the bear:
With golden muzzles all their mouths were bound,
And collars of the same their necks surround.
Thus through the fields Lycurgus took his way;
His hundred knights attend in pomp and proud array.

To match this monarch, with strong Arcite came
Emetrius king of Ind, (a mighty name!)
On a bay courser, goodly to behold, [gold.
The trappings of his horse emboss'd with barbarous
Not Mars bestrode a steed with greater grace;
His surcoat o'er his arms was cloth of Thrace,
Adorn'd with pearls, all orient, round, and great;
His saddle was of gold, with emeralds set.
His shoulders large a mantle did attire,
With rubies thick, and sparkling as the fire:
His amber-colour'd locks in ringlets run
With graceful negligence, and shone against the sun.
His nose was aquiline, his eyes were blue,
Ruddy his lips, and fresh and fair his hue:
Some sprinkled freckles on his face were seen,
Whose dusk set off the whiteness of the skin.
His awful presence did the crowd surprise,
Nor durst the rash spectator meet his eyes;
Eyes, that confess'd him born for kingly sway,
So fierce, they flash'd intolerable day.
His age in nature's youthful prime appear'd,
And just began to bloom his yellow beard;
Whene'er he spoke, his voice was heard around,
Loud as a trumpet, with a silver sound;

A laurel wreath his temples, fresh and green,
And myrtle sprigs, the marks of love, were mix'd between;
Upon his fist he bore, for his delight,
An eagle well reclaim'd, and lily-white.

His hundred knights attend him to the war,
All arm'd for battle, save their heads were bare.
Words and devices blaz'd on every shield,
And pleasing was the terror of the field.
For kings, and dukes, and barons you might see,
Like sparkling stars, though different in degree,
All for the' increase of arms, and love of chivalry.
Before the king tame leopards led the way,
And troops of lions innocently play:
So Bacchus through the conquer'd Indies rode,
And beasts in gambols frisk'd before their honest god!

In this array the war of either side
Through Athens pass'd with military pride.
At prime, they enter'd on the Sunday morn;
Rich tap'stry spread the streets, and flowers the pots adorn.
The town was all a jubilee of feasts:
So Theseus will'd, in honour of his guests.
Himself with open arms the king embrac'd;
Then all the rest in their degrees were grac'd.
No harbinger was needful for the night,
For every house was proud to lodge a knight.

I pass the royal treat, nor must relate
The gifts bestow'd, nor how the champions sate;
Who first, who last, or how the knights address'd
Their vows, or who was fairest at the feast;

Whose voice, whose graceful dance, did most surprise;
Soft amorous sighs, and silent love of eyes.
The rivals call my Muse another way,
To sing their vigils for the' ensuing day.

'Twas ebbing darkness, past the noon of night,
And Phosphor, on the confines of the light,
Promis'd the sun, ere day began to spring;
The tuneful lark already stretch'd her wing,
And, flickering on her nest, made short essays to sing:
When wakeful Palamon, preventing day,
Took to the royal lists his early way,
To Venus at her fane, in her own house to pray.
There falling on his knees before her shrine,
He thus implor'd with prayers her power divine:—
'Creator Venus! genial power of love!
The bliss of men below and gods above!
Beneath the sliding sun thou run'st thy race,
Dost fairest shine and best become thy place:
For thee the winds their eastern blasts forbear;
Thy month reveals the spring, and opens all the year.
Thee, goddess! thee the storms of winter fly;
Earth smiles with flowers renewing; laughs the sky;
And birds to lays of love their tuneful notes apply.
For thee the lion loathes the taste of blood,
And, roaring, hunts his female through the wood:
For thee the bulls rebellow through the groves,
And tempt the streams, and snuff their absent loves.
'Tis thine whate'er is pleasant, good, or fair;
All nature is thy province, life thy care:
Thou mad'st the world, and dost the world repair.

Thou gladder of the mount of Cytheron,
Increase of Jove, companion of the sun!
If e'er Adonis touch'd thy tender heart,
Have pity, goddess, for thou know'st the smart.
Alas! I have not words to tell my grief;
To vent my sorrow would be some relief:
Light sufferings give us leisure to complain;
We groan, but cannot speak, in greater pain.
O goddess! tell thyself what I would say;
Thou know'st it, and I feel too much to pray.
So grant my suit as I enforce my might,
In love to be thy champion and thy knight;
A servant to thy sex, a slave to thee,
A foe profest to barren chastity.
Nor ask I fame or honour of the field;
Nor choose I more to vanquish than to yield:
In my divine Emilia make me bless'd,
Let fate or partial chance dispose the rest:
Find thou the manner and the means prepare;
Possession, more than conquest, is my care.
Mars is the warrior's god; in him it lies,
On whom he favours to confer the prize;
With smiling aspect you serenely move
In your fifth orb, and rule the realm of love.
The Fates but only spin the coarser clue;
The finest of the wool is left for you.
Spare me but one small portion of the twine,
And let the Sisters cut below your line;
The rest among the rubbish may they sweep,
Or add it to the yarn of some old miser's heap.
But if you this ambitious prayer deny,
(A wish, I grant, beyond mortality)
Then let me sink beneath proud Arcite's arms,
And I once dead, let him possess her charms!'

Thus ended he: then, with observance due,
The sacred incense on her altar threw.
The curling smoke mounts heavy from the fires;
At length it catches flame, and in a blaze expires:
At once the gracious goddess gave the sign,
Her statue shook, and trembled all the shrine.
Pleas'd, Palamon the tardy omen took;
For, since the flames pursued the trailing smoke,
He knew his boon was granted: but the day
To distance driven, and joy adjourn'd with long delay.

Now morn with rosy light had streak'd the sky,
Up rose the sun, and up rose Emily;
Address'd her early steps to Cynthia's fane,
In state, attended by her maiden train,
Who bore the vests that holy rites require,
Incense, and odorous gums, and cover'd fire.
The plenteous horns with pleasant mead they crown,
Nor wanted aught besides in honour of the moon.
Now, while the temple smok'd with hallow'd steam,
They wash the virgin in a living stream.
The secret ceremonies I conceal,
Uncouth, perhaps unlawful, to reveal:
But such they were as pagan use requir'd,
Perform'd by women when the men retir'd;
Whose eyes profane, their chaste mysterious rites
Might turn to scandal or obscene delights.
Well-meaners think no harm; but for the rest,
Things sacred they pervert, and silence is the best.
Her shining hair, uncomb'd, was loosely spread,
A crown of mastless oak adorn'd her head,

When, to the shrine approach'd, the spotless maid
Had kindling fires on either altar laid:
(The rites were such as were observ'd of old,
By Statius in his Theban story told:)
Then kneeling, with her hands across her breast,
Thus lowly she prefer'd her chaste request:—

O goddess! haunter of the woodland-green,
To whom both heaven, and earth, and seas are seen;
Queen of the nether skies, where half the year
Thy silver beams descend, and light the gloomy sphere;
Goddess of maids! and conscious of our hearts,
So keep me from the vengeance of thy darts,
Which Niobe's devoted issue felt,
When hissing through the skies the feather'd deaths [were dealt;
As I desire to live a virgin life,
Nor know the name of mother or of wife.
Thy votaress from my tender years I am,
And love, like thee, the woods and silvan game.
Like death, thou know'st, I loath the nuptial state;
And man, the tyrant of our sex, I hate;
A lowly servant, but a lofty mate.
Where love is duty on the female side, [pride.
On their's mere sensual gust, and sought with surly
Now by thy triple shape, as thou art seen
In heaven, earth, hell, and every where a queen,
Grant this, my first desire: let discord cease,
And make betwixt the rivals lasting peace;
Quench their hot fire, or far from me remove
The flame, and turn it on some other love.
Or if my frowning stars have so decreed,
That one must be rejected, one succeed,

Make him my lord, within whose faithful breast
Is fix'd my image, and who loves me best.
But, oh! ev'n that avert! I choose it not;
But take it as the least unhappy lot.
A maid I am, and of thy virgin train:
Oh, let me still that spotless name retain!
Frequent the forests, thy chaste will obey,
And only make the beasts of chase my prey!'

The flames ascend on either altar clear,
While thus the blameless maid address'd her pray'r.
When lo! the burning fire that shone so bright,
Flew off, all sudden, with extinguish'd light,
And left one altar dark, a little space,
Which turn'd, self-kindled, and renew'd the blaze:
The other victor-flame a moment stood,
Then fell, and lifeless left the' extinguish'd wood;
For ever lost, the' irrevocable light
Forsook the blackening coals and sunk to night:
At either end it whistled as it flew,
And as the brands were green, so drop'd the dew,
Infected, as it fell, with sweat of sanguine hue.

The maid from that ill omen turn'd her eyes,
And with loud shrieks and clamours rent the skies;
Nor knew what signified the boding sign,
But found the powers displeas'd, and fear'd the wrath divine.

Then shook the sacred shrine, and sudden light
Sprung through the vaulted roof, and made the temple bright.
The power, behold! the power in glory shone,
By her bent bow and her keen arrows known;

The rest, a huntress issuing from the wood,
Reclining on her cornel spear she stood;
Then graeious thus began:—'Dismiss thy fear,
And Heaven's unchang'd decrees attentive hear:
More powerful gods have torn thee from my side,
Unwilling to resign, and doom'd a bride:
The two contending knights are weigh'd above:
One Mars protects, and one the queen of Love;
But which the man, is in the Thunderer's breast,
This he pronoune'd—'tis he who loves thee best.
The fire that once extinct reviv'd again,
Foreshows the love allotted to remain:
Farewell!' she said; and vanish'd from the place:
The sheaf of arrows shook, and rattled in the case.
Aghast at this, the royal virgin stood
Disclaim'd, and now no more a sister of the wood:
But to the parting goddess thus she pray'd:
'Propitious still be present to my aid,
Nor quite abandon your once favour'd maid!'
Then, sighing, she return'd; but smil'd betwixt,
With hopes and fears, and joys with sorrows mixt.

The next returning planetary hour
Of Mars, who shar'd the Heptarchy of pow'r,
His steps bold Arcite to the temple bent,
To' adore with pagan rites the power armipotent:
Then prostrate low before his altar lay,
And rais'd his manly voice, and thus began to pray:
'Strong God of Arms! whose iron seeptre sways
The freezing north and Hyperborean seas,
And Scythian colds, and Thracia's winter coast,
Where stand thy steeds, and thou art honour'd most:
There most; but every where thy power is known,
The fortune of the fight is all thy own:

Terror is thine, and wild amazement flung
From out thy chariot, withers e'en the strong;
And disarray and shameful rout ensue,
And force is added to the fainting crew.
Acknowledg'd as thou art, accept my pray'r:
If aught I have achiev'd deserve thy care;
If to my utmost power, with sword and shield,
I dar'd the death, unknowing how to yield;
And, falling in my rank, still kept the field:
Then let my arms prevail, by thee sustain'd,
That Emily by conquest may be gain'd.
Have pity on my pains; nor those unknown
To Mars, which, when a lover, were his own.
Venus, the public care of all above,
Thy stubborn heart has soften'd into love;
Now, by her blandishments and powerful charms,
When, yielded, she lay curling in thy arms;
Ev'n by thy shame, if shame it may be call'd,
When Vulcan had thee in his net enthrall'd:
O envied ignominy! sweet disgrace!
When every god that saw thee, wish'd thy place!
By those dear pleasures, aid my arms in fight,
And make me conquer in my patron's right;
For I am young, a novice in the trade,
The fool of love, unpractis'd to persuade;
And want the soothing arts that catch the fair,
But, caught myself, lie struggling in the snare:
And she I love or laughs at all my pain,
Or knows her worth too well and pays me with disdain.
For sure I am, unless I win in arms,
To stand excluded from Emilia's charms:
Nor can my strength avail, unless by thee
Endued with force, I gain the victory:

Then for the fire which warm'd thy generous heart,
Pity thy subject's pains and equal smart:
So be the morrow's sweat and labour mine;
The palm and honour of the conquest thine.
Then shall the war, and stern debate, and strife
Immortal, be the business of my life;
And in thy fane, the dusty spoils among,
High on the burnish'd roof my banner shall be hung,
Rank'd with my champion's bucklers; and below,
With arms revers'd the' achievements of my foe:
And while these limbs the vital spirit feeds,
While day to night, and night to day succeeds,
Thy smoking altars shall be fat with food
Of incense, and the grateful steam of blood;
Burnt-offerings morn and evening shall be thine,
And fires eternal in thy temple shine.
The bush of yellow beard, this length of hair,
Which from my birth inviolate I bear,
Guiltless of steel, and from the razor free,
Shall fall, a plenteous crop, reserv'd for thee.
So may my arms with victory be blest,
I ask no more, let fate dispose the rest!'

The champion ceas'd; there follow'd in the close
A hollow groan; a murmuring wind arose;
The rings of iron that on the doors were hung
Sent out a jarring sound, and harshly rung:
The bolted gates flew open at the blast;
The storm rush'd in; and Arcite stood aghast!
The flames were blown aside, yet shone they bright,
Fan'd by the wind, and gave a ruffled light.

Then from the ground a scent began to rise,
Sweet smelling, as accepted sacrifice:

This omen pleas'd; and, as the flames aspire,
With odorous incense Arcite heaps the fire:
Nor wanted hymns to Mars, or heathen charms;
At length the nodding statue clash'd his arms,
And with a sullen sound and feeble cry,
Half sunk and half pronoune'd the word of victory!
For this, with soul devout, he thank'd the god;
And, of success secure, return'd to his abode.

These vows, thus granted, rais'd a strife above,
Betwixt the god of War and queen of Love.
She granting first, had right of time to plead;
But he had granted too, nor would recede.
Jove was for Venus, but he fear'd his wife,
And seem'd unwilling to decide the strife;
Till Saturn from his leaden throne arose,
And found a way the difference to compose:
Though sparing of his grace, to mischief bent,
He seldom does a good with good intent.
Wayward, but wise; by long experience taught;
To please both parties, for ill ends, he sought:
For this advantage age from youth has won,
As, not to be outridden, though outrun.
By fortune he was now to Venus trin'd,*
And with stern Mars in Capricorn was join'd:
Of him disposing in his own abode,
He sooth'd the goddess, while he gull'd the god:—
'Cease, daughter, to complain, and stint the strife,
Thy Palamon shall have his promis'd wife;
And Mars, the lord of conquest, in the fight,
With palm and laurel shall adorn his knight.

* Trine is an aspect of planets supposed by astrologers to be eminently benign.

Wide is my course, nor turn I to my place
Till length of time, and move with tardy pace.
Man feels me when I press the' ethereal plains;
My hand is heavy, and the wound remains.
Mine is the shipwreck, in a watery sign;
And in an earthy, the dark dungeon mine.
Cold shivering agues, melancholy care,
And bitter blasting winds, and poison'd air,
Are mine; and wilful death, resulting from despair.
The throttling quinsy 'tis my star appoints,
And rheumatisms I send, to rack the joints.
When churls rebel against their native prince,
I arm their hands, and furnish the pretence;
And, housing in the lion's hateful sign,
Bought senates and deserting troops are mine.
Mine is the privy poisoning; I command
Unkindly seasons and ungrateful land;
By me kings' palaces are push'd to ground,
And miners crush'd beneath their mines are found;
'Twas I slew Sampson, when the pillar'd hall
Fell down, and crush'd the many with the fall:
My looking is the sire of pestilence,
That sweeps at once the people and the prince.
Now weep no more, but trust thy grandsire's art;
Mars shall be pleas'd, and thou perform thy part.
'Tis ill, though different your complexions are,
The family of heaven for men should war.'
The' expedient pleas'd, where neither lost his right:
Mars had the day, and Venus had the night.
The management they left to Chronos' care:
Now turn we to the' effect, and sing the war.

In Athens all was pleasure, mirth, and play,
All proper to the spring and sprightly May;

Which every soul inspir'd with such delight,
'Twas justing all the day, and love at night.
Heaven smil'd, and gladded was the heart of man;
And Venus had the world as when it first began.
At length in sleep their bodies they compose,
And dreamt the future fight, and early rose.

Now scarce the dawning day began to spring,
As, at a signal given, the streets with clamours ring:
At once the crowd arose; confus'd and high,
Ev'n from the heavens was heard a shouting cry;
For Mars was early up, and rous'd the sky.
The gods came downward to behold the wars,
Sharpening their sights, and leaning from their stars.
The neighing of the generous horse was heard,
For battle by the busy groom prepar'd:
Rustling of harness, rattling of the shield,
Clattering of armour furbish'd for the field.
Crowds to the castle mounted up the street,
Battering the pavement with their coursers' feet:
The greedy sight might there devour the gold
Of glittering arms, too dazzling to behold;
And polish'd steel, that cast the view aside,
And crested morions with their plumy pride.
Knights, with a long retinue of their squires,
In gaudy liveries march, and quaint attires:
One lac'd the helm, another held the lance,
A third the shining buckler did advance.
The courser paw'd the ground with restless feet,
And snorting foam'd, and champ'd the golden bit.
The smiths and armourers on palfreys ride,
Files in their hands, and hammers at their side,
And nails for loosen'd spears, and thongs for shields provide.

The yoemen guard the streets in seemly bands,
And clowns come crowding on with cudgels in their hands.

The trumpets, next the gate in order plac'd,
Attend the sign to sound the martial blast:
The palace-yard is fill'd with floating tides,
And the last comers bear the former to the sides.
The throng is in the midst: the common crew
Shut out, the hall admits the better few.
In knots they stand, or in a rank they walk,
Serious in aspect, earnest in their talk:
Factious, and favouring this or t'other side,
As their strong fancies and weak reason guide.
Their wagers back their wishes: numbers hold
With the fair freckled king, and beard of gold;
So vigorous are his eyes, such rays they cast,
So prominent his eagle's beak is plac'd.
But most their looks on the black monarch bend,
His rising muscles and his brawn commend;
His double-biting axe and beamy spear,
Each asking a gigantic force to rear.
All spoke as partial favour mov'd the mind.
And, safe themselves, at others' cost divin'd.

Wak'd by the cries, the' Athenian chief arose,
The knightly forms of combat to dispose;
And, passing through the' obsequious guards, he sate
Conspicuous on a throne, sublime in state.
There, for the two contending knights he sent:
Arm'd cap-a-pee, with reverence low they bent:
He smil'd on both, and with superior look,
Alike their offer'd adoration took.

The people press on every side to see
Their awful prince, and hear his high decree.
Then signing to their heralds with his hand,
They gave his orders from their lofty stand.
Silence is thrice enjoin'd; then thus aloud
The king at arms bespeaks the knights and listening crowd:

'Our sovereign lord has ponder'd in his mind
The means to spare the blood of gentle kind;
And of his grace and inborn clemency,
He modifies his first severe decree:
The keener edge of battle to rebate,
The troops for honour fighting, not for hate,
He wills, not death should terminate their strife;
And wounds, if wounds ensue, be short of life;
But issues, ere the fight, his dread command,
That slings afar, and poinards hand to hand,
Be banish'd from the field; that none shall dare
With shorten'd sword to stab in closer war;
But in fair combat fight, with manly strength;
Nor push with biting point, but strike at length.
The tourney is allow'd but one career
Of the tough ash with the sharp-grinded spear:
But knights unhors'd may rise from off the plain,
And fight on foot their honour to regain.
Nor, if at mischief taken, on the ground
Be slain, but prisoners to the pillar bound,
At either barrier plac'd; or, captives made,
Be freed; or, arm'd anew, the fight invade.
The chief of either side bereft of life,
Or yielded to his foe, concludes the strife. [young,
Thus dooms the lord: now valiant knights and
Fight each his fill with swords and maces long.'

The herald ends: the vaulted firmament
With loud acclaims and vast applause is rent:
'Heaven guard a prince so gracious and so good,
So just, and yet so provident of blood!'
This was the general cry. The trumpet's sound
And warlike symphony is heard around.
The marching troops through Athens take their way,
The great earl-marshal orders their array.
The fair from high the passing pomp behold;
A rain of flowers is from the windows roll'd.
The casements are with golden tissue spread,
And horses' hoofs, for earth, on silken tapestry tread.
The king goes midmost, and the rivals ride
In equal rank, and close his either side.
Next after these, there rode the royal wife,
With Emily, the cause and the reward of strife.
The following cavalcade by three and three,
Proceed by titles marshall'd in degree.
Thus through the southern gate they take their way,
And at the lists arriv'd, ere prime of day.
There, parting from the king, the chiefs divide,
And wheeling east and west, before their meiny ride.
The' Athenian monarch mounts his throne on high,
And after him the queen, and Emily:
Next these, the kindred of the crown are grac'd
With nearer seats, and lords by ladies plac'd.
Scarce were they seated, when with clamours loud
In rush'd at once a rude promiscuous crowd:
The guards and they each other overbare,
And in a moment throng the spacious theatre.
Now chang'd the jarring noise to whispers low,
As winds forsaking seas more softly blow,

When at the western gate, on which the car
Is plac'd aloft that bears the god of War,
Proud Arcite entering arm'd before his train,
Stops at the barrier and divides the plain:
Red was his banner, and display'd abroad
The bloody colours of his patron-god.

At that self-moment enters Palamon
The gate of Venus and the rising sun;
Wav'd by the wanton winds, his banner flies
All maiden white, and shares the people's eyes.
From east to west, look all the world around,
Two troops so match'd were never to be found:
Such bodies built for strength, of equal age,
In stature siz'd; so proud an equipage:
The nicest eye could no distinction make,
Where lay the' advantage, or what side to take.
Thus rang'd, the herald for the last proclaims
A silence, while they answer'd to their names:
For so the king decreed, to shun with care
The fraud of musters false, the common bane of war.
The tale was just, and then the gates were clos'd;
And chief to chief, and troop to troop oppos'd.
The heralds last retir'd and loudly cried,
'The fortune of the field be fairly tried!'

At this, the challenger with fierce defy
His trumpet sounds; the challeng'd makes reply;
With clangor rings the field, resounds the vaulted sky.
Their vizors clos'd, their lances in the rest,
Or at the helmet pointed, or the crest;
They vanish from the barrier, speed the race,
And, spurring, see decrease the middle space.

A cloud of smoke envelopes either host,
And all at once the combatants are lost:
Darkling they join adverse, and shock unseen,
Coursers with coursers justling, men with men:
As labouring in eclipse, awhile they stay,
Till the next blast of wind restores the day.
They look anew: the beauteous form of fight
Is chang'd, and war appears a grisly sight.
Two troops in fair array one moment show'd,
The next, a field with fallen bodies strow'd:
Not half the number in their seats are found:
But men and steeds lie grovelling on the ground.
The points of spears are stuck within the shield,
The steeds without their riders scour the field.
The knights unhors'd on foot renew the fight;
The glittering falchions cast a gleaming light:
Hauberks and helms are hew'd with many a wound;
Out spins the streaming blood, and dyes the ground.
The mighty maces with such haste descend, [bend.
They break the bones, and make the solid armour
This thrusts amid the throng with furious force:
Down goes, at once, the horseman and the horse:
That courser stumbles on the fallen steed,
And, floundering, throws the rider o'er his head.
One rolls along, a football to his foes;
One with a broken truncheon deals his blows.
This halting, this disabled with his wound,
In triumph led, is to the pillar bound,
Where, by the king's award, he must abide:
There goes a captive led on t'other side.
By fits they cease; and leaning on the lance,
Take breath awhile, and to new fight advance.
Full oft the rivals met, and neither spar'd
His utmost force, and each forgot to ward.

The head of this was to the saddle bent,
That other backward to the crupper sent;
Both were by turns unhors'd; the jealous blows
Fall thick and heavy, when on foot they close.
So deep their falchions bite, that every stroke
Pierc'd to the quick; and equal wounds they gave and took.
Borne far asunder by the tides of men,
Like adamant and steel they meet again.
So when a tiger sucks the bullock's blood,
A famish'd lion issuing from the wood
Roars lordly fierce, and challenges the food;
Each claims possession, neither will obey,
But both their paws are fasten'd on the prey:
They bite, they tear; and while in vain they strive,
The swains come arm'd between, and both to distance drive.

At length, as fate foredoom'd, and all things tend
By course of time to their appointed end;
So when the sun to west was far declin'd,
And both afresh in mortal battle join'd,
The strong Emetrius came in Arcite's aid,
And Palamon with odds was overlaid:
For turning short, he struck with all his might
Full on the helmet of the' unwary knight.
Deep was the wound; he stagger'd with the blow,
And turn'd him to his unexpected foe;
Whom with such force he struck, he fell'd him down,
And cleft the circle of his golden crown.
But Arcite's men who now prevail'd in fight,
Twice ten at once surround the single knight:

O'erpower'd at length, they force him to the ground,
Unyielded as he was, and to the pillar bound;
And king Lycurgus, while he fought in vain
His friend to free, was tumbled on the plain.

Who now laments but Palamon, compell'd
No more to try the fortune of the field!
And worse than death, to view with hateful eyes
His rival's conquest, and renounce the prize!

The royal judge on his tribunal plac'd,
Who had beheld the fight from first to last,
Bade cease the war; pronouncing from on high
'Arcite of Thebes had won the beauteous Emily.'
The sound of trumpets to the voice replied,
And round the royal list the heralds cried,
'Arcite of Thebes has won the beauteous bride!'

The people rend the skies with vast applause;
All own the chief, when fortune owns the cause.
Arcite is own'd ev'n by the gods above,
And conquering Mars insults the queen of Love.
So laugh'd he when the rightful Titan fail'd,
And Jove's usurping arms in heaven prevail'd.
Laugh'd all the powers who favour tyranny,
And all the standing army of the sky.
But Venus with dejected eyes appears,
And, weeping, on the lists distil'd her tears;
Her will refus'd, which grieves a woman most,
And in her champion foil'd, the cause of love is lost.
Till Saturn said, 'Fair daughter, now be still,
The blustering fool has satisfied his will:
His boon is given; his knight has gain'd the day,
But lost the prize; the' arrears are yet to pay.

Thy hour is come, and mine the care shall be
To please thy knight, and set thy promise free.'

Now while the heralds run the lists around,
And 'Arcite, Arcite,' heaven and earth resound;
A miracle (nor less it could be call'd)
Their joy with unexpected sorrow pall'd.
The victor knight had laid his helm aside,
Part for his ease, the greater part for pride;
Bare headed, popularly low he bow'd,
And paid the salutations of the crowd.
Then spurring at full speed, ran endlong on
Where Theseus sate on his imperial throne;
Furious he drove, and upward cast his eye,
Where, next the queen, was plac'd his Emily;
Then passing, to the saddle-bow he bent,
A sweet regard the gracious virgin lent:
(For women, to the brave an easy prey,
Still follow fortune, where she leads the way:)
Just then, from earth sprung out a flashing fire,
By Pluto sent, at Saturn's bad desire:
The startling steed was seiz'd with sudden fright,
And, bounding, o'er the pummel cast the knight:
Forward he flew, and pitching on his head,
He quiver'd with his feet, and lay for dead.
Black was his countenance in a little space,
For all the blood was gather'd in his face.
Help was at hand; they rear'd him from the ground,
And from his cumbrous arms his limbs unbound;
Then lanc'd a vein, and watch'd returning breath;
It came, but clogg'd with symptoms of his death.
The saddle-bow the noble parts had press'd,
All bruis'd and mortified his manly breast.
Him still entranc'd, and in a litter laid,
They bore from field, and to his bed convey'd.

At length he wak'd, and with a feeble ery,
The word he first pronoune'd was 'Emily.'

Meantime the king, though inwardly he mourn'd,
In pomp triumphant to the town return'd,
Attended by the ehiefs, who fought the field;
(Now friendly mix'd, and in one troop compell'd.)
Compos'd his looks to eounterfeited cheer,
And bade them not for Arcite's life to fear.
But that which gladded all the warrior-train,
Though most were solely wounded, none were slain.
The surgeons soon despoil'd 'em of their arms,
And some with salves they eure, and some with eharms;
Foment the bruises, and the pains assuage,
And heal their inward hurts with sov'reign draughts of sage.
The king in person visits all around,
Comforts the siek, eongratulates the sound;
Honours the princely chiefs, rewards the rest,
And holds for thriee three days a royal feast.
None was disgrae'd; for falling is no shame;
And eowardiee alone is loss of fame.
The venturous knight is from the saddle thrown;
But 'tis the fault of fortune, not his own.
If crowns and palms the conquering side adorn,
The vietor under better stars was born:
The brave man seeks not popular applause,
Nor overpower'd with arms deserts his eause;
Unsham'd, though foil'd, he does the best he ean;
Foree is of brutes, but honour is of man.

Thus Theseus smil'd on all with equal graee;
And each was set aecording to his plaee.
With ease were reconeil'd the differing parts,
For envy never dwells in noble hearts.

At length they took their leave, the time expir'd,
Well pleas'd; and to their several homes retir'd.

Meanwhile the health of Arcite still impairs:
From bad proceeds to worse, and mocks the leeches' cares:
Swoln in his breast, his inward pains increase,
All means are us'd, and all without success.
The clotted blood lies heavy on his heart,
Corrupts, and there remains in spite of art:
Nor breathing veins, nor cupping will prevail;
All outward remedies and inward fail:
The mould of nature's fabric is destroy'd,
Her vessels discompos'd, her virtue void:
The bellows of his lungs begin to swell:
All out of frame is every secret cell,
Nor can the good receive, nor bad expel.
Those breathing organs, thus within oppress'd,
With venom soon distend the sinews of his breast.
Nought profits him to save abandon'd life,
Nor vomit's upward aid, nor downward laxatife.
The midmost region batter'd and destroy'd,
When nature cannot work, the' effect of art is void;
For physic can but mend our crazy state,
Patch an old building, not a new create.
Arcite is doom'd to die in all his pride,
Must leave his youth, and yield his beauteous bride,
Gain'd hardly, against right, and unenjoy'd.
When 'twas declar'd all hope of life was past,
Conscience (that of all physic works the last)
Caus'd him to send for Emily in haste.
With her, at his desire, came Palamon;
Then, on his pillow rais'd, he thus begun:

'No language can express the smallest part
Of what I feel and suffer in my heart
For you, whom best I love and value most:
But to your service I bequeath my ghost;
Which, from this mortal body, when untied,
Unseen, unheard, shall hover at your side;
Nor fright you waking, nor your sleep offend,
But wait officious, and your steps attend:
How I have lov'd, excuse my faltering tongue,
My spirit's feeble, and my pains are strong:
This I may say, I only grieve to die
Because I lose my charming Emily:
To die, when Heaven had put you in my pow'r,
Fate could not choose a more malicious hour!
What greater curse could envious fortune give,
Than just to die, when I began to live!
Vain men, how vanishing a bliss we crave,
Now warm in love, now withering in the grave!
Never, O! never more to see the sun!
Still dark, in a damp vault, and still alone!
This fate is common; but I lose my breath
Near bliss, and yet not bless'd before my death.
Farewell! but take me dying in your arms,
'Tis all I can enjoy of all your charms:
This hand I cannot but in death resign;
Ah, could I live! but while I live 'tis mine.
I feel my end approach, and thus embrac'd,
Am pleas'd to die; but hear me speak my last.
Ah! my sweet foe, for you, and you alone,
I broke my faith with injur'd Palamon.
But love the sense of right and wrong confounds,
Strong love and proud ambition have no bounds.
And much I doubt, should Heaven my life prolong,
I should return to justify my wrong:

For while my former flames remain within,
Repentance is but want of power to sin.
With mortal hatred I pursued his life,
Nor he, nor you, were guilty of the strife;
Nor I, but as I lov'd: yet all combin'd,
Your beauty, and my impotence of mind,
And his concurrent flame that blew my fire;
For still our kindred souls had one desire.
He had a moment's right in point of time;
Had I seen first, then his had been the crime.
Fate made it mine, and justified his right;
Nor holds this earth a more deserving knight,
For virtue, valour, and for noble blood,
Truth, honour, all that is compris'd in good;
So help me Heaven! in all the world is none
So worthy to be lov'd as Palamon.
He loves you too with such a holy fire,
As will not, cannot, but with life expire:
Our vow'd affections both have often tried,
Nor any love but yours could ours divide.
Then, by my love's inviolable band,
By my long suffering, and my short command,
If e'er you plight your vows when I am gone,
Have pity on the faithful Palamon!'

This was his last; for death came on amain,
And exercis'd below his iron reign;
Then upward, to the seat of life he goes;
Sense fled before him, what he touch'd he froze;
Yet could he not his closing eyes withdraw,
Though less and less of Emily he saw:
So speechless for a little space he lay,
Then grasp'd the hand he held, and sigh'd his soul
away.

But whither went his soul, let such relate
Who search the secrets of the future state:
Divines can say but what themselves believe;
Strong proofs they have, but not demonstrative;
For, were all plain, then all sides must agree,
And faith itself be lost in certainty.
To live uprightly then is sure the best,
To save ourselves, and not to damn the rest.
The soul of Arcite went, where heathens go,
Who better live than we, though less they know.

In Palamon a manly grief appears;
Silent he wept, asham'd to show his tears:
Emilia shriek'd but once, and then oppress'd
With sorrow, sunk upon her lover's breast:
Till Theseus, in his arms convey'd with care,
Far from so sad a sight, the swooning fair.
'Twere loss of time her sorrow to relate;
Ill bears the sex a youthful lover's fate,
When just approaching to the nuptial state.
But like a low-hung cloud, it rains so fast,
That all at once it falls, and cannot last.
The face of things is chang'd, and Athens now,
That laugh'd so late, becomes the scene of woe:
Matrons and maids, both sexes, every state,
With tears lament the knight's untimely fate.
Not greater grief in falling Troy was seen
For Hector's death; but Hector was not then.
Old men with dust deform'd their hoary hair,
The women beat their breasts, their cheeks they tear.
'Why wouldst thou go, (with one consent they cry)
When thou hadst gold enough, and Emily!'

Theseus himself, who should have cheer'd the grief
Of others, wanted now the same relief.
Old Egeus only could revive his son,
Who various changes of the world had known,
And strange vicissitudes of human fate,
Still altering, never in a steady state:
Good after ill, and after pain delight;
Alternate, like the scenes of day and night.
'Since every man who lives is born to die,
And none can boast sincere felicity,
With equal mind, what happens let us bear,
Nor joy nor grieve too much for things beyond our care.
Like pilgrims, to the' appointed place we tend;
The world's an inn, and death the journey's end.
Ev'n kings but play; and when their part is done,
Some other, worse or better, mount the throne.'
With words like these the crowd was satisfied,
And so they would have been, had Theseus died.

But he, their king, was labouring in his mind,
A fitting place for funeral pomps to find,
Which were in honour of the dead design'd.
And after long debate, at last he found
(As love itself had mark'd the spot of ground)
That grove for ever green, that conscious land,
Where he with Palamon fought hand to hand:
That, where he fed his amorous desires
With soft complaints, and felt his hottest fires:
There other flames might waste his earthly part,
And burn his limbs, where love had burn'd his heart.

This once resolv'd, the peasants were enjoin'd
Sere wood, and firs, and dodder'd oaks to find.

With sounding axes to the grove they go,
Fell, split, and lay the fuel on a row,
Vulcanian food: a bier is next prepar'd,
On which the lifeless body should be rear'd
Cover'd with cloth of gold, on which was laid
The corps of Arcite, in like robes array'd.
White gloves were on his hands, and on his head
A wreath of laurel, mix'd with myrtle, spread.
A sword keen-edg'd within his right he held,
The warlike emblem of the conquer'd field:
Bare was his manly visage on the bier;
Menac'd his countenance, ev'n in death severe.
Then to the palace-hall they bore the knight,
To lie in solemn state, a public sight.
Groans, cries, and howlings fill the crowded place,
And unaffected sorrow sate on every face.
Sad Palamon above the rest appears,
In sable garments dew'd with gushing tears,
His auburn locks on either shoulder flow'd,
Which to the funeral of his friend he vow'd:
But Emily, as chief, was next his side,
A virgin-widow, and a mourning bride.
And that the princely obsequies might be
Perform'd according to his high degree,
The steed that bore him living to the fight,
Was trapp'd with polish'd steel, all shining bright,
And cover'd with the' achievments of the knight.
The riders rode abreast, and one his shield,
His lance of cornel-wood another held;
The third his bow; and, glorious to behold,
The costly quiver, all of burnish'd gold.
The noblest of the Grecians next appear,
And, weeping, on their shoulders bore the bier:
With sober pace they march'd, and often staid,
And through the master-street the corps convey'd.

The houses to their tops with black were spread,
And ev'n the pavements were with mourning hid.
The right side of the pall old Egeus kept,
And on the left the royal Theseus wept:
Each bore a golden bowl of work divine, [wine.
With honey fill'd and milk, and mix'd with ruddy
Then Palamon, the kinsman of the slain,
And after him appear'd the' illustrious train:
To grace the pomp, came Emily the bright,
With cover'd fire, the funeral pile to light.
With high devotion was the service made,
And all the rites of pagan honour paid:
So lofty was the pile, a Parthian bow,
With vigour drawn, must send the shaft below.
The bottom was full twenty fathom broad,
With crackling straw beneath in due proportion strow'd.
The fabric seem'd a wood of rising green,
With sulphur and bitumen cast between
To feed the flames: the trees were unctuous fir,
And mountain-ash, the mother of the spear;
The mourner yew and builder oak were there:
The beech, the swimming alder, and the plane,
Hard box, and linden of a softer grain,
And laurels, which the gods for conquering chiefs ordain.
How they were rank'd, shall rest untold by me,
With nameless nymphs that liv'd in every tree;
Nor how the dryads, and the woodland train,
Disherited, ran howling o'er the plain:
Nor how the birds to foreign seats repair'd,
Or beasts, that bolted out, and saw the forest bar'd:
Nor how the ground, now clear'd, with ghastly fright
Beheld the sudden sun, a stranger to the light.

The straw, as first I said, was laid below;
Of chips and sere-wood was the second row;
The third of greens, and timber newly fell'd;
The fourth high stage the fragrant odours held.
And pearls, and precious stones, and rich array;
In midst of which, embalm'd, the body lay.
The service sung, the maid with mourning eyes
The stubble fir'd; the smouldering flames arise:
This office done, she sunk upon the ground;
But what she spoke, recover'd from her swoon,
I want the wit in moving words to dress;
But by themselves the tender sex may guess.
While the devouring fire was burning fast,
Rich jewels in the flame the wealthy cast;
And some their shields, and some their lances threw,
And gave their warrior's ghost a warrior's due.
Full bowls of wine, of honey, milk, and blood,
Were pour'd upon the pile of burning wood,
And hissing flames receive, and hungry lick the food.
Then thrice the mounted squadrons ride around
The fire, and Arcite's name they thrice resound:
'Hail! and farewell!' they shouted thrice amain,
Thrice facing to the left, and thrice they turn'd again;
Still as they turn'd, they beat their clattering shields;
The women mix their cries; and clamour fills the fields.
The warlike wakes continued all the night,
And funeral games were play'd at new returning light:
Who naked wrestled best, besmear'd with oil,
Or who with gauntlets gave or took the foil,
I will not tell you, nor would you attend;
But briefly haste to my long story's end.

I pass the rest; the year was fully mourn'd,
And Palamon long since to Thebes return'd,
When, by the Grecians' general consent,
At Athens Theseus held his parliament:
Among the laws that pass'd, it was decreed,
That conquer'd Thebes from bondage should be freed;
Reserving homage to the' Athenian throne,
To which the sovereign summon'd Palamon.
Unknowing of the cause, he took his way,
Mournful in mind, and still in black array.

The monarch mounts the throne, and plac'd on high,
Commands into the court the beauteous Emily:
So call'd, she came; the senate rose, and paid
Becoming reverence to the royal maid.
And first soft whispers through the' assembly went;
With silent wonder then they watch'd the' event:
All hush'd, the king arose with awful grace,
Deep thought was in his breast, and counsel in his face.

At length he sigh'd; and having first prepar'd
The' attentive audience, thus his will declar'd:

"The cause and spring of motion, from above
Hung down on earth the golden chain of love:
Great was the' effect, and high was his intent,
When peace among the jarring seeds he sent.
Fire, flood, and earth, and air, by this were bound,
And love, the common link, the new creation crown'd.

The chain still holds; for though the forms decay,
Eternal matter never wears away:
The same first Mover certain bounds has plac'd,
How long those perishable forms shall last;
Nor can they last beyond the time assign'd
By that all-seeing and all-making mind:
Shorten their hours they may, for will is free,
But never pass the' appointed destiny.
So men oppress'd, when weary of their breath,
Throw off the burden, and suborn their death.
Then since those forms begin, and have their end,
On some unalter'd cause they sure depend:
Parts of the whole are we; but God the whole,
Who gives us life, and animating soul.
For nature cannot from a part derive
That being, which the whole can only give:
He perfect, stable; but imperfect we,
Subject to change, and different in degree:
Plants, beasts, and man, and, as our organs are,
We more or less of his perfection share.
But by a long descent, the' ethereal fire
Corrupts; and forms, the mortal part, expire:
As he withdraws his virtue, so they pass,
And the same matter makes another mass.
This law the' omniscient Power was pleas'd to give,
That every kind should by succession live:
That individuals die, his will ordains;
The propagated species still remains.
The monarch oak, the patriarch of the trees,
Shoots rising up, and spreads by slow degrees;
Three centuries he grows, and three he stays
Supreme in state, and in three more decays;
So wears the paving pebble in the street,
And towns and towers their fatal periods meet;

So rivers, rapid once, now naked lie, [dry.
Forsaken of their springs, and leave their channels
So man, at first a drop, dilates with heat,
Then form'd, the little heart begins to beat;
Secret he feeds, unknowing, in the cell;
At length, for hatching ripe, he breaks the shell,
And struggles into breath, and cries for aid;
Then, helpless, in his mother's lap is laid:
He creeps, he walks, and issuing into man,
Grudges their life from whence his own began.
Reckless of laws, affects to rule alone,
Anxious to reign, and restless on the throne:
First vegetive, then feels, and reasons last;
Rich of three souls, and lives all three to waste.
Some thus; but thousands more in flower of age:
For few arrive to run the latter stage.
Sunk in the first, in battle some are slain,
And others whelm'd beneath the stormy main.
What makes all this, but Jupiter the king,
At whose command we perish and we spring?
Then 'tis our best, since thus ordain'd to die,
To make a virtue of necessity.
Take what he gives, since to rebel is vain:
The bad grows better, which we well sustain;
And could we choose the time, and choose aright,
'Tis best to die, our honour at the height,
When we have done our ancestors no shame,
But serv'd our friends, and well secur'd our fame.
Then should we wish our happy life to close,
And leave no more for fortune to dispose:
So should we make our death a glad relief
From future shame, from sickness, and from grief:
Enjoying, while we live, the present hour,
And dying in our excellence and flow'r.

Then round our death-bed every friend should run,
And joy us of our conquest, early won:
While the malicious world with envious tears
Should grudge our happy end, and wish it theirs.
Since then our Arcite is with honour dead,
Why should we mourn, that he so soon is freed,
Or call untimely what the gods decreed?
With grief as just, a friend may be deplor'd,
From a foul prison to free air restor'd.
Ought he to thank his kinsman, or his wife,
Could tears recal him into wretched life!
Their sorrow hurts themselves; on him is lost;
And worse than both, offends his happy ghost.
What then remains, but after past annoy,
To take the good vicissitude of joy?
To thank the gracious gods for what they give;
Possess our souls, and while we live, to live?
Ordain we then two sorrows to combine,
And in one point the' extremes of grief to join,
That, thence resulting, joy may be renew'd,
As jarring notes in harmony conclude.
Then I propose, that Palamon shall be
In marriage join'd with beauteous Emily;
For which already I have gain'd the' assent
Of my free people in full parliament.
Long love to her has borne the faithful knight,
And well deserv'd, had fortune done him right:
'Tis time to mend her fault; since Emily
By Arcite's death from former vows is free.
If you, fair sister, ratify the' accord,
And take him for your husband and your lord;
'Tis no dishonour to confer your grace
On one descended from a royal race:

And were he less, yet years of service past
From grateful souls exact reward at last:
Pity is heaven's and yours: nor can she find
A throne so soft as in a woman's mind.'

He said; she blush'd; and as o'eraw'd by might,
Seem'd to give Theseus, what she gave the knight.
Then turning to the Theban, thus he said:
'Small arguments are needful to persuade
Your temper to comply with my command;'
And speaking thus, he gave Emilia's hand.
Smil'd Venus, to behold her own true knight
Obtain the conquest, though he lost the fight,
And bless'd with nuptial bliss the sweet laborious night.
Eros and Anteros, on either side,
One fir'd the bridegroom, and one warm'd the bride;
And long-attending Hymen from above
Shower'd on the bed the whole Idalian grove.
All of a tenor was their after-life,
No day discolour'd with domestic strife;
No jealousy, but mutual truth believ'd,
Secure repose, and kindness undeceiv'd.
Thus Heaven, beyond the compass of his thought,
Sent him the blessing he so dearly bought.

So may the queen of Love long duty bless,
And all true lovers find the same success!

SIGISMONDA AND GUISCARDO.

FROM

BOCCACE.

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BOCCACE.

WHILE Norman Tancred in Salerno reign'd,
The title of a gracious prince he gain'd;
Till turn'd a tyrant in his latter days,
He lost the lustre of his former praise;
And from the bright meridian where he stood,
Descending, dip'd his hands in lover's blood.

This prince of fortune's favour long possess'd,
Yet was with one fair daughter only bless'd;
And bless'd he might have been with her alone:
But oh! how much more happy, had he none!
She was his care, his hope, and his delight,
Most in his thought, and ever in his sight:
Next, nay beyond his life, he held her dear;
She liv'd by him, and now he liv'd in her.
For this, when ripe for marriage, he delay'd
Her nuptial bands, and kept her long a maid:
As envying any else should share a part
Of what was his, and claiming all her heart.
At length, as public decency requir'd,
And all his vassals eagerly desir'd,

With mind averse, he rather underwent
His people's will, than gave his own consent:
So was she torn, as from a lover's side,
And made, almost in his despite, a bride.

Short were her marriage joys; for in the prime
Of youth, her lord expir'd before his time:
And to her father's court, in little space
Restor'd anew, she held a higher place;
More lov'd, and more exalted into grace.
This princess fresh, and young, and fair, and wise,
The worship'd idol of her father's eyes,
Did all her sex in every grace exceed,
And had more wit beside than woman need.

Youth, health, and ease, and most an amorous mind,
To second nuptials had her thoughts inclin'd;
And former joys had left a secret sting behind.
But, prodigal in every other grant,
Her sire left unsupplied her only want;
And she, betwixt her modesty and pride,
Her wishes, which she could not help, would hide.

Resolv'd at last to lose no longer time,
And yet to please herself without a crime,
She cast her eyes around the court, to find
A worthy subject suiting to her mind,
To him in holy nuptials to be tied,
A seeming widow, and a secret bride.
Among the train of courtiers, one she found
With all the gifts of bounteous nature crown'd;
Of gentle blood, but one whose niggard fate
Had set him far below her high estate;

Guiscard his name was call'd, of blooming age,
Now squire to Tancred, and before his page:
To him, the choice of all the shining crowd,
Her heart the noble Sigismonda vow'd.

Yet hitherto she kept her love conceal'd,
And with close glances every day beheld
The graceful youth; and every day increas'd
The raging fire that burn'd within her breast;
Some secret charm did all his acts attend,
And what his fortune wanted, her's could mend:
Till, as the fire will force its outward way,
Or, in the prison pent, consume the prey,
So long her earnest eyes on him were set,
At length their twisted rays together met;
And he, surpris'd, with humble joy survey'd
One sweet regard, shot by the royal maid:
Not well assur'd, while doubtful hopes he nurs'd,
A second glance came gliding like the first;
And he, who saw the sharpness of the dart,
Without defence receiv'd it in his heart.
In public though their passion wanted speech,
Yet mutual looks interpreted for each:
Time, ways, and means of meeting, were denied;
But all those wants ingenious love supplied.
The' inventive god, who never fails his part,
Inspires the wit, when once he warms the heart.

When Guiscard next was in the circle seen,
Where Sigismonda held the place of queen,
A hollow cane within her hand she brought,
But in the concave had enclos'd a note:
With this she seem'd to play, and, as in sport,
Toss'd to her love, in presence of the court:

'Take it,' she said, 'and when your needs require,
This little brand will serve to light your fire.'
He took it with a bow, and soon divin'd
The seeming toy was not for nought design'd:
But when retir'd, so long with curious eyes
He view'd the present, that he found the prize.
Much was in little writ; and all convey'd
With cautious care, for fear to be betray'd
By some false confidant, or favourite maid.
The time, the place, the manner how to meet,
Were all in punctual order plainly writ:
But since a trust must be, she thought it best
To put it out of laymens power at least,
And for their solemn vows prepar'd a priest.

Guiscard (her secret purpose understood)
With joy prepar'd to meet the coming good;
Nor pains nor danger was resolv'd to spare,
But use the means appointed by the fair.

Next the proud palace of Salerno stood
A mount of rough ascent, and thick with wood:
Through this a cave was dug with vast expense;
The work it seem'd of some suspicious prince,
Who, when abusing power with lawless might,
From public justice would secure his flight.
The passage, made by many a winding way,
Reach'd ev'n the room in which the tyrant lay.
Fit for his purpose, on a lower floor
He lodg'd, whose issue was an iron door,
From whence, by stairs descending to the ground,
In the blind grot a safe retreat he found.
Its outlet ended in a brake o'ergrown
With brambles, chok'd by time, and now unknown

A rift there was, which from the mountain's height
Convey'd a glimmering and malignant light,
A breathing place to draw the damps away,
A twilight of an intercepted day.
The tyrant's den, whose use, though lost to fame,
Was now the' apartment of the royal dame:
The cavern, only to her father known,
By him was to his darling daughter shown.

Neglected long, she let the secret rest,
Till love recall'd it to her labouring breast,
And hinted as the way by heaven design'd
The teacher, by the means he taught, to blind.
What will not women do, when need inspires
Their wit, or love their inclination fires!
Though jealousy of state the' invention found,
Yet love refin'd upon the former ground;
That way the tyrant had reserv'd to fly
Pursuing hate, now serv'd to bring two lovers nigh.

The dame, who long in vain had kept the key,
Bold by desire, explor'd the secret way;
Now tried the stairs, and wading through the night
Search'd all the deep recess, and issued into light.
All this her letter had so well explain'd,
The' instructed youth might compass what remain'd:
The cavern-mouth alone was hard to find,
Because the path, disus'd, was out of mind;
But in what quarter of the copse it lay,
His eye by certain level could survey:
Yet (for the wood perplex'd with thorns he knew)
A frock of leather o'er his limbs he drew;
And thus provided, search'd the brake around,
Till the chok'd entry of the cave he found.

Thus, all prepar'd, the promis'd hour arriv'd,
So long expected, and so well contriv'd;
With Love to friend, the' impatient lover went,
Fenc'd from the thorns, and trod the deep descent.
The conscious priest, who was suborn'd before,
Stood ready posted at the postern-door;
The maids in distant rooms were sent to rest,
And nothing wanted but the' invited guest.
He came, and knocking thrice, without delay,
The longing lady heard, and turn'd the key;
At once invaded him with all her charms,
And the first step he made was in her arms:
The leathern outside, boisterous as it was,
Gave way, and bent beneath her strict embrace:
On either side the kisses flew so thick,
That neither he nor she had breath to speak.
The holy man, amaz'd at what he saw,
Made haste to sanctify the bliss by law:
And mutter'd fast the matrimony o'er,
For fear committed sin should get before.
His work perform'd, he left the pair alone,
Because he knew he could not go too soon;
His presence odious, when his task was done.
What thoughts he had, beseems not me to say;
Though some surmise he went to fast and pray,
And needed both, to drive the tempting thoughts away.

The foe once gone, they took their full delight;
'Twas restless rage, and tempest all the night:
For greedy love each moment would employ,
And grudg'd the shortest pauses of their joy.

Thus were their loves auspiciously begun,
And thus with secret care were carried on:
The stealth itself did appetite restore,
And look'd so like a sin, it pleas'd the more.

The cave was now become a common way,
The wicket, often open'd, knew the key:
Love rioted secure, and long enjoy'd,
Was ever eager, and was never cloy'd.

But as extremes are short, of ill and good,
And tides, at highest mark, regorge the flood;
So fate, that could no more improve their joy,
Took a malicious pleasure to destroy.

Tancred, who fondly lov'd, and whose delight
Was plac'd in his fair daughter's daily sight;
Of custom, when his state affairs were done,
Would pass his pleasing hours with her alone:
And, as a father's privilege allow'd,
Without attendance of the' officious crowd.

It happen'd once, that when in heat of day
He tried to sleep, as was his usual way,
The balmy slumber fled his wakeful eyes,
And forc'd him, in his own despite, to rise:
Of sleep forsaken, to relieve his care,
He sought the conversation of the fair:
But with her train of damsels she was gone,
In shady walks the scorching heat to shun.
He would not violate that sweet recess,
And found besides a welcome heaviness
That seiz'd his eyes; and slumber, which forgot,
When call'd before to come, now came unsought.

From light retir'd, behind his daughter's bed,
He for approaching sleep compos'd his head;
A chair was ready, for that use design'd,
So quilted, that he lay at ease reclin'd;
The curtains closely drawn, the light to screen,
As if he had contriv'd to lie unseen:
Thus cover'd with an artificial night,
Sleep did his office soon, and seal'd his sight.

With Heaven averse, in this ill-omen'd hour
Was Guiscard summon'd to the secret bow'r,
And the fair nymph, with expectation fir'd,
From her attending damsels was retir'd:
For, true to love, she measur'd time so right,
As not to miss one moment of delight.
The garden, seated on the level floor,
She left behind, and locking every door,
Thought all secure; but little did she know,
Blind to her fate, she had enclos'd her foe.
Attending Guiscard, in his leathern frock,
Stood ready, with his thrice-repeated knock:
Thrice with a doleful sound the jarring grate
Rung deaf, and hollow, and presag'd their fate.
The door unlock'd, to known delight they haste,
And panting in each other's arms, embrac'd;
Rush to the conscious bed, a mutual freight,
And heedless press it with their wonted weight.

The sudden bound awak'd the sleeping sire,
And show'd a sight no parent can desire:
His opening eyes at once with odious view
The love discover'd, and the lover knew:
He would have cried; but hoping that he dreamt,
Amazement tied his tongue, and stop'd the' attempt.

The' ensuing moment all the truth declar'd;
But now he stood collected and prepar'd,
For malice and revenge had put him on his guard.

So, like a lion that unheeded lay,
Dissembling sleep, and watchful to betray,
With inward rage he meditates his prey.
The thoughtless pair, indulging their desires,
Alternate kindled, and then quench'd their fires;
Nor thinking in the shades of death they play'd,
Full of themselves, themselves alone survey'd,
And too secure, were by themselves betray'd.
Long time dissolv'd in pleasure thus they lay,
Till nature could no more suffice their play;
Then rose the youth, and through the cave again
Return'd; the princess mingled with her train.

Resolv'd his unripe vengeance to defer,
The royal spy, when now the coast was clear,
Sought not the garden, but retir'd unseen,
To brood in secret on his gather'd spleen,
And methodise revenge: to death he griev'd;
And, but he saw the crime, had scarce believ'd.
The' appointment for the' ensuing night he heard;
And therefore in the cavern had prepar'd
Two brawny yeomen of his trusty guard.

Scarce had unwary Guiscard set his foot
Within the foremost entrance of the grot,
When these in secret ambush ready lay,
And rushing on the sudden, seiz'd the prey:
Encumber'd with his frock, without defence,
An easy prize, they led the prisoner thence,
And, as commanded, brought before the prince.

The gloomy sire, too sensible of wrong
To vent his rage in words, restrain'd his tongue;
And only said, 'Thus servants are prefer'd:
And trusted, thus their sovereigns they reward.
Had I not seen, had not these eyes receiv'd
Too clear a proof, I could not have believ'd.'

He paus'd, and chok'd the rest. The youth, who saw
His forfeit life abandon'd to the law,
The judge the' accuser, and the' offence to him
Who had both power and will to' avenge the crime.
No vain defence prepar'd, but thus replied:
'The faults of love by love are justified:
With unresisted might the monarch reigns,
He levels mountains, and he raises plains;
And not regarding difference of degree,
Abas'd your daughter, and exalted me.'

This bold return with seeming patience heard,
The prisoner was remitted to the guard.
The sullen tyrant slept not all the night,
But lonely walking by a winking light,
Sobb'd, wept, and groan'd, and beat his wither'd breast,
But would not violate his daughter's rest;
Who long expecting lay, for bliss prepar'd,
Listening for noise, and griev'd that none she heard;
Oft rose, and oft in vain employ'd the key,
And oft accus'd her lover of delay;
And pass'd the tedious hours in anxious thoughts away.

The morrow came; and at his usual hour
Old Tancred visited his daughter's bow'r;

Her cheek (for such his custom was) he kiss'd,
Then bless'd her kneeling, and her maids dismiss'd.
The royal dignity thus far maintain'd,
Now left in private, he no longer feign'd;
But all at once his grief and rage appear'd,
And floods of tears ran trickling down his beard.

'O Sigismonda!' he began to say:
Thrice he began, and thrice was forc'd to stay,
Till words, with often trying, found their way:
'I thought, O Sigismonda, (but how blind
Are parents' eyes, their childrens' faults to find!)
Thy virtue, birth, and breeding were above
A mean desire, and vulgar sense of love:
Nor less than sight and hearing could convince
So fond a father, and so just a prince,
Of such an unforeseen and unbeliev'd offence.
Then what indignant sorrow must I have,
To see thee lie subjected to my slave!
A man so smelling of the people's lee,
The court receiv'd him first for charity;
And since, with no degree of honour grac'd,
But only suffer'd, where he first was plac'd:
A grovelling insect still; and so design'd
By nature's hand, nor born of noble kind:
A thing, by neither man nor woman priz'd,
And scarcely known enough to be despis'd.
To what has Heaven reserv'd my age? Ah! why
Should man, when nature calls, not choose to die,
Rather than stretch the span of life, to find
Such ills as fate has wisely cast behind;
For those to feel, whom fond desire to live
Makes covetous of more than life can give!
Each has his share of good; and when 'tis gone,
The guest, though hungry, cannot rise too soon.

But I, expecting more, in my own wrong
Protracting life, have liv'd a day too long.
If yesterday could be recall'd again,
Ev'n now would I conclude my happy reign:
But 'tis too late, my glorious race is run,
And a dark cloud o'ertakes my setting sun.
Hadst thou not lov'd, or loving, sav'd the shame
If not the sin, by some illustrious name;
This little comfort had reliev'd my mind,
'Twas frailty, not unusual to thy kind:
But thy low fall beneath thy royal blood,
Shows downward appetite to mix with mud.
Thus, not the least excuse is left for thee,
Nor the least refuge for unhappy me.

'For him I have resolv'd, whom by surprise
I took, and scarce can call it, in disguise:
For such was his attire, as with intent
Of nature, suited to his mean descent:
The harder question yet remains behind,
What pains a parent and a prince can find
To punish an offence of this degenerate kind.

'As I have lov'd, and yet I love thee more
Than ever father lov'd a child before;
So, that indulgence draws me to forgive;
Nature, that gave thee life, would have thee live.
But, as a public parent of the state,
My justice, and thy crime, requires thy fate.
Fain would I choose a middle course to steer;
Nature's too kind, and justice too severe:
Speak for us both, and to the balance bring
On either side, the father and the king.
Heaven knows, my heart is bent to favour thee;
Make it but scanty weight, and leave the rest to me.'

Here stopping with a sigh, he pour'd a flood
Of tears, to make his last expression good.

She, who had heard him speak, nor saw alone
The secret conduct of her love was known,
But he was taken who her soul possess'd,
Felt all the pangs of sorrow in her breast;
And little wanted, but a woman's heart,
With cries and tears, had testified her smart:
But in-born worth, that fortune can control,
New strung and stiffer bent her softer soul;
The heroine assum'd the woman's place,
Confirm'd her mind, and fortified her face.
Why should she beg, or what could she pretend,
When her stern father had condemn'd her friend?
Her life she might have had; but her despair
Of saving his had put it past her care:
Resolv'd on fate, she would not lose her breath,
But rather than not die, solicit death.
Fix'd on this thought, she, not as women use,
Her fault, by common frailty, would excuse;
But boldly justified her innocence,
And while the fact was own'd denied the' offence;
Then, with dry eyes, and with an open look,
She met his glance mid-way, and thus undaunted
[spoke:
'Tancred, I neither am dispos'd to make
Request for life, nor offer'd life to take;
Much less deny the deed; but, least of all,
Beneath pretended justice weakly fall.
My words to sacred truth shall be confin'd,
My deeds shall show the greatness of my mind.
That I have lov'd, I own; that still I love,
I call to witness all the powers above:

Yet more I own: to Guiscard's love I give
The small remaining time I have to live;
And if beyond this life desire can be,
Not fate itself shall set my passion free.

'This first avow'd; nor folly warp'd my mind,
Nor the frail texture of the female kind
Betray'd my virtue: for, too well I knew
What honour was, and honour had his due.
Before the holy priest my vows were tied,
So came I not a strumpet, but a bride.
This for my fame, and for the public voice:
Yet more, his merits justified my choice;
Which had they not, the first election thine,
That bond dissolv'd, the next is freely mine:
Or grant I err'd, (which yet I must deny)
Had parents power ev'n second vows to tie,
Thy little care to mend my widow'd nights
Has forc'd me to recourse of marriage rites,
To fill an empty side, and follow known delights.
What have I done in this, deserving blame?
State laws may alter—Nature's are the same;
Those are usurp'd on helpless woman-kind,
Made without our consent, and wanting power to bind.

'Thou, Tancred, better should'st have understood,
That as thy father gave thee flesh and blood,
So gav'st thou me: not from the quarry hew'd,
But of a softer mould, with sense endued;
Ev'n softer than thy own, of suppler kind,
More exquisite of taste, and more than man refin'd.
Nor need'st thou by thy daughter to be told,
Though now thy sprightly blood with age be cold,

Thou hast been young: and canst remember still,
That when thou hadst the power, thou hadst the will;
And from the past experience of thy fires,
Canst tell with what a tide our strong desires
Come rushing on in youth, and what their rage requires.

'And grant thy youth was exercis'd in arms,
When love no leisure found for softer charms;
My tender age in luxury was train'd,
With idle ease and pageants entertain'd;
My hours my own, my pleasures unrestrain'd:
So bred, no wonder if I took the bent
That seem'd ev'n warranted by thy consent;
For, when the father is too fondly kind,
Such seeds he sows, such harvest shall he find.
Blame then thyself, as reason's law requires,
(Since nature gave, and thou foment'st my fires;)
If still those appetites continue strong,
Thou may'st consider, I am yet but young:
Consider too, that having been a wife,
I must have tasted of a better life;
And am not to be blam'd if I renew,
By lawful means, the joys which then I knew.
Where was the crime, if pleasure I procur'd,
Young, and a woman, and to bliss inur'd?
That was my case, and this is my defence;
I pleas'd myself, I shun'd incontinence,
And, urg'd by strong desires, indulg'd my sense.

'Left to myself, I must avow, I strove
From public shame to screen my secret love;
And well acquainted with thy native pride,
Endeavour'd, what I could not help, to hide,
For which, a woman's wit an easy way supplied.

How this so well contriv'd, so closely laid,
Was known to thee, or by what chance betray'd,
Is not my care: to please thy pride alone,
I could have wish'd it had been still unknown.
'Nor took I Guiscard by blind fancy led,
Or hasty choice, as many women wed;
But with deliberate care and ripen'd thought,
At leisure first design'd, before I wrought:
On him I rested, after long debate,
And, not without considering, fix'd my fate:
His flame was equal, though by mine inspir'd,
(For so the difference of our birth requir'd:
Had he been born like me, like me his love
Had first begun what mine was forc'd to move:
But thus beginning, thus we persevere;
Our passions yet continue what they were,
Nor length of trial makes our joys the less sincere.
'At this my choice, though not by thine allow'd,
(Thy judgment herding with the common crowd)
Thou tak'st unjust offence; and, led by them,
Dost less the merit, than the man esteem.
Too sharply, Tancred, by thy pride betray'd,
Hast thou against the laws of kind inveigh'd:
For all the' offence is in opinion plac'd,
Which deems high birth by lowly choice debas'd!
This thought alone with fury fires thy breast,
(For holy marriage justifies the rest)
That I have sunk the glories of the state,
And mix'd my blood with a plebian mate:
In which I wonder thou should'st oversee
Superior causes, or impute to me
The fault of fortune, or the fates' decree.
Or call it heaven's imperial power alone, [known:
Which moves on springs of justice, though un-

Yet this we see, though order'd for the best,
The bad exalted, and the good oppress'd;
Permitted laurels grace the lawless brow,
The' unworthy rais'd, the worthy east below.

'But leaving that: search we the secret springs,
And backward trace the principles of things;
There shall we find, that when the world began,
One common mass compos'd the mould of man;
One paste of flesh on all degrees bestow'd,
And kneaded up alike with moistening blood.
The same Almighty Power inspir'd the frame
With kindled life, and form'd the souls the same:
The faculties of intellect, and will
Dispens'd with equal hand, dispos'd with equal skill;
Like liberty indulg'd, with choice of good or ill:
Thus born alike, from virtue first began
The difference that distinguish'd man from man:
He claim'd no title from descent of blood,
But that which made him noble, made him good:
Warm'd with more particles of heavenly flame,
He wing'd his upward flight, and soar'd to fame;
The rest remain'd below, a tribe without a name.

'This law, though custom now diverts the course,
As nature's institute, is yet in force,
Unancell'd, though disus'd; and he whose mind
Is virtuous, is alone of noble kind:
Though poor in fortune, of celestial race;
And he commits the crime who calls him base.

'Now lay the line, and measure all thy court
By inward virtue, not external port;

And find whom justly to prefer above
The man on whom my judgment plac'd my love:
So shalt thou see his parts and person shine,
And thus compar'd, the rest a base degenerate line.
Nor took I, when I first survey'd thy court,
His valour or his virtues on report;
But trusted what I ought to trust alone,
Relying on thy eyes, and not my own:
Thy praise (and thine was then the public voice)
First recommended Guiscard to my choice.
Directed thus by thee, I look'd, and found
A man, I thought, deserving to be crown'd;
First by my father pointed to my sight,
Nor less conspicuous by his native light;
His mind, his mien, the features of his face,
Excelling all the rest of human race: [aright,
These were thy thoughts, and thou couldst judge
Till interest made a jaundice in thy sight.
Or should I grant, thou didst not rightly see;
Then thou wert first deceiv'd, and I deceiv'd by thee.
But if thou shalt allege, through pride of mind,
Thy blood with one of base condition join'd,
'Tis false; for 'tis not baseness to be poor;
His poverty augments thy crime the more;
Upbraids thy justice with the scant regard
Of worth: whom princes praise, they should reward.
Are these the kings entrusted by the crowd
With wealth to be dispens'd for common good?
The people sweat not for their king's delight,
To' enrich a pimp, or raise a parasite;
Theirs is the toil: and he who well has serv'd
His country, has his country's wealth deserv'd.
Ev'n mighty monarchs oft are meanly born,
And kings by birth to lowest rank return;

All subject to the power of giddy chance,
For fortune can depress, or can advance:
But true nobility is of the mind,
Not given by chance, and not to chance resign'd.

'For the remaining doubt of thy decree,
What to resolve, and how dispose of me;
Be warn'd to cast that useless care aside,
Myself alone will for myself provide;
If, in thy doting and decrepit age,
Thy soul a stranger in thy youth to rage,
Begins in cruel deeds to take delight,
Gorge with my blood thy barbarous appetite;
For I so little am dispos'd to pray
For life, I would not cast a wish away.
Such as it is, the' offence is all my own;
And what to Guiscard is already done,
Or to be done, is doom'd by thy decree,
That, if not executed first by thee,
Shall on my person be perform'd by me.

'Away! with women weep, and leave me here,
Fix'd like a man, to die without a tear;
Or save, or slay us both this present hour,
'Tis all that fate has left within thy pow'r!'

She said: nor did her father fail to find,
In all she spoke, the greatness of her mind;
Yet thought she was not obstinate to die,
Nor deem'd the death she promis'd was so nigh.
Secure in this belief, he left the dame,
Resolv'd to spare her life, and save her shame;
But that detested object to remove,
To wreak his vengeance, and to cure her love.

Intent on this, a secret order sign'd,
The death of Guiscard to his guards enjoin'd:

Strangling was chosen, and the night the time;
A mute revenge, and blind as was the crime:
His faithful heart, a bloody sacrifice,
Torn from his breast, to glut the tyrant's eyes,
Clos'd the severe command: for, slaves to pay,
What kings decree, the soldier must obey:
Wag'd against foes; and when the wars are o'er,
Fit only to maintain despotic pow'r:
Dangerous to freedom, and desir'd alone
By kings who seek an arbitrary throne.
Such were these guards; as ready to have slain
The prince himself, allur'd with greater gain:
So was the charge perform'd with better will,
By men inur'd to blood, and exercis'd in ill.

Now though the sullen sire had eas'd his mind,
The pomp of his revenge was yet behind,
A pomp prepar'd to grace the present he design'd.
A goblet rich with gems, and rough with gold,
Of depth and breadth the precious pledge to hold,
With cruel care he chose: the hollow part
Inclos'd, the lid conceal'd, the lover's heart.
Then of his trusted mischiefs, one he sent,
And bade him with these words the gift present:
'Thy father sends thee this, to cheer thy breast,
And glad thy sight with what thou lov'st the best;
As thou hast pleas'd his eyes, and joy'd his mind,
With what he lov'd the most of human kind.'

Ere this, the royal dame, who well had weigh'd
The consequence of what her sire had said,
Fix'd on her fate, against the' expected hour
Procur'd the means to have it in her pow'r:
For this, she had distill'd with early care,
The juice of simples, friendly to despair,

A magazine of death; and thus prepar'd,
Secure to die, the fatal message heard;
Then smil'd severe; nor with a troubled look,
Or trembling hand, the funeral present took;
Ev'n kept her countenance, when the lid, remov'd,
Diselos'd the heart unfortunately lov'd.
She needed not be told within whose breast
It lodg'd; the message had explain'd the rest.
Or not amaz'd, or hiding her surprise,
She sternly on the bearer fix'd her eyes;
Then thus: 'Tell Tancred on his daughter's part,
The gold, though precious, equals not the heart:
But he did well to give his best; and I,
Who wish'd a worthier urn, forgive his poverty!'

At this, she curb'd a groan, that else had come,
And pausing, view'd the present in the tomb:
Then to the heart ador'd devoutly glew'd
Her lips, and raising it, her speech renew'd:
'Ev'n from my day of birth to this, the bound
Of my unhappy being, I have found
My father's care and tenderness express'd;
But this last act of love excels the rest:
For this so dear a present, bear him back
The best return that I can live to make.'

The messenger dispatch'd, again she view'd
The lov'd remains, and sighing, thus pursued:
'Source of my life, and lord of my desires,
In whom I liv'd, with whom my soul expires;
Poor heart! no more the spring of vital heat,
Curs'd be the hands that tore thee from thy seat!
The course is finish'd which thy fates decreed,
And thou from thy corporeal prison freed:
Soon hast thou reach'd the goal with mended pace,
A world of woes dispatch'd in little space:

Forc'd by thy worth, thy foe in death become
Thy friend, has lodg'd thee in a costly tomb.
There yet remain'd thy funeral exequies,
The weeping tribute of thy widow's eyes;
And those, indulgent Heav'n has found the way
That I before my death have leave to pay.
My father ev'n in cruelty is kind,
Or heav'n has turn'd the malice of his mind
To better uses than his hate design'd;
And made the' insult which in his gift appears,
The means to mourn thee with my pious tears;
Which I will pay thee down before I go,
And save myself the pains to weep below,
If souls can weep; though once I meant to meet
My fate with face unmov'd, and eyes unwet;
Yet since I have thee here in narrow room,
My tears shall set thee first afloat within thy tomb:
Then (as I know thy spirit hovers nigh)
Under thy friendly conduct will I fly
To regions unexplor'd, secure to share
Thy state; nor hell shall punishment appear;
And Heav'n is double heav'n, if thou art there!'

She said: her brim-full eyes, that ready stood,
And only wanted will to weep a flood,
Releas'd their watery store, and pour'd amain,
Like clouds low hung, a sober show'r of rain;
Mute solemn sorrow, free from female noise,
Such as the majesty of grief destroys:
For, bending o'er the cup, the tears she shed
Seem'd by the posture to discharge her head,
O'er-fill'd before; and oft (her mouth applied
To the cold heart) she kiss'd at once, and cried.
Her maids, who stood amaz'd, nor knew the cause
Of her complaining, nor whose heart it was,

Yet all due measures of her mourning kept,
Did office at the dirge, and by infection wept;
And oft inquir'd the' occasion of her grief,
(Unanswer'd but by sighs) and offer'd vain relief.
At length, her stock of tears already shed,
She wip'd her eyes, she rais'd her drooping head,
And thus pursued: 'O ever faithful heart!
I have perform'd the ceremonial part,
The decencies of grief: it rests behind,
That as our bodies were, our souls be join'd:
To thy whate'er abode, my shade convey,
And as an elder ghost, direct the way.'
She said; and bade the vial to be brought,
Where she before had brew'd the deadly draught:
First pouring out the med'cinable bane,
The heart, her tears had rins'd, she bath'd again;
Then down her throat the death securely throws,
And quaffs a long oblivion of her woes.

This done, she mounts the genial bed, and there
(Her body first compos'd with honest care)
Attends the welcome rest: her hands yet hold,
Close to her heart, the monumental gold;
Nor further word she spoke, but clos'd her sight,
And, quiet, sought the covert of the night.

The damsels, who the while in silence mourn'd,
Not knowing, nor suspecting, death suborn'd;
Yet, as their duty was, to Tancred sent,
Who, conscious of the' occasion, fear'd the event.
Alarm'd, and with presaging heart he came,
And drew the curtains, and expos'd the dame
To loathsome light: then, with a late relief,
Made vain efforts to mitigate her grief.
She, what she could, excluding day, her eyes
Kept firmly seal'd, and sternly thus replies:

'Tanered! restrain thy tears, unsought by me,
And sorrow, unavailing now to thee:
Did ever man before afflict his mind,
To see the' effect of what himself design'd?
Yet if thou hast remaining in thy heart
Some sense of love, some unextinguish'd part
Of former kindness, largely once profess'd,
Let me by that adjure thy harden'd breast,
Not to deny thy daughter's last request.
The secret love, which I so long enjoy'd,
And still conceal'd, to gratify thy pride,
Thou hast disjoin'd; but, with my dying breath,
Seek not, I beg thee, to disjoin our death:
Where'er his corpse by thy command is laid,
Thither let mine in public be convey'd;
Expos'd in open view, and side by side,
Acknowledg'd as a bridegroom and a bride.'

The prince's anguish hinder'd his reply:
And she, who felt her fate approaching nigh,
Seiz'd the cold heart, and heaving to her breast,
'Here, precious pledge,' she said, 'securely rest!'
These accents were her last; the creeping death
Benumb'd her senses first, then stop'd her breath.

Thus she for disobedience justly died;
The sire was justly punish'd for his pride:
The youth, least guilty, suffer'd for the' offence
Of duty violated to his prince;
Who, late repenting of his cruel deed,
One common sepulchre for both decreed;
Intomb'd the wretched pair in royal state,
And on their monument inscrib'd their fate.

THE

COCK AND THE FOX;

OR,

THE TALE OF THE NUN'S PRIEST.

FROM

CHAUCER.

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FROM CHAUCER.

THERE liv'd, as authors tell, in days of yore,
A widow somewhat old, and very poor:
Deep in a cell her cottage lonely stood,
Well thatch'd, and under covert of a wood.

This dowager, on whom my tale I found,
Since last she laid her husband in the ground,
A simple sober life in patience led,
And had but just enough to buy her bread:
But huswifing the little Heaven had lent,
She duly paid a groat for quarter-rent;
And pinch'd her belly with her daughters two,
To bring the year about with much ado.

The cattle in her homestead were three sows,
An ewe call'd Mally, and three brindled cows.
Her parlour-window stuck with herbs around,
Of savoury smell; and rushes strew'd the ground.

A maple-dresser in her hall she had,
On which full many a slender meal she made
For no delicious morsel pass'd her throat;
According to her cloth she cut her coat:
No poignant sauce she knew, nor costly treat,
Her hunger gave a relish to her meat:
A sparing diet did her health assure;
Or sick, a pepper-posset was her cure.
Before the day was done, her work she sped,
And never went by candle-light to bed:
With exercise she sweat ill humours out,
Her dancing was not hinder'd by the gout.
Her poverty was glad; her heart content;
Nor knew she what the spleen or vapours meant.

Of wine she never tasted through the year,
But white and black was all her homely cheer;
Brown bread, and milk, (but first she skim'd her bowls)
And rashers of sing'd bacon on the coals.
On holy-days, an egg, or two, at most;
But her ambition never reach'd to roast.

A yard she had with pales enclos'd about,
Some high, some low, and a dry ditch without.
Within this homestead liv'd, without a peer
For crowing loud, the noble Chanticleer:
So hight her cock, whose singing did surpass
The merry notes of organs at the mass.
More certain was the crowing of a cock
To number hours, than is an abbey-clock;
And sooner than the matin-bell was rung,
He clap'd his wings upon his roost, and sung:

For when degrees fifteen ascended right,
By sure instinct he knew 'twas one at night.
High was his comb, and coral-red withal,
In dents embattled like a castle-wall:
His bill was raven-black, and shone like jet;
Blue were his legs, and orient were his feet:
White were his nails, like silver to behold,
His body glittering like the burnish'd gold.

This gentle cock, for solace of his life,
Six misses had, beside his lawful wife;
Scandal, that spares no king, though ne'er so good,
Says they were all of his own flesh and blood;
His sisters both by sire and mother's side,
And sure their likeness show'd them near allied.
But mark the worst, the monarch did no more
Than all the Ptolomies had done before:
When incest is for interest of a nation,
'Tis made no sin by holy dispensation.
Some lines have been maintain'd by this alone,
Which by their common ugliness are known.

But passing this, as from our tale apart,
Dame Partlet was the sovereign of his heart:
Ardent in love, outrageous in his play,
He feathered her a hundred times a day:
And she, that was not only passing fair,
But was withal discreet and debonaire,
Resolv'd the passive doctrine to fulfil,
Though loth, and let him work his wicked will.
At board and bed was affable and kind,
According as their marriage-vow did bind,
And as the church's precept had enjoin'd.

Ev'n since she was a se'ennight old, they say,
Was chaste and humble to her dying day;
Nor chick, nor hen, was known to disobey.

By this, her husband's heart she did obtain:
What cannot beauty, join'd with virtue, gain!
She was his only joy, and he her pride,
She, when he walk'd, went pecking by his side;
If spurning on the ground, he sprung a corn,
The tribute in his bill to her was borne.
But oh! what joy it was to hear him sing
In summer, when the day began to spring;
Stretching his neck, and warbling in his throat
Solus cum solâ, then was all his note.
For in the days of yore, the birds of parts
Were bred to speak, and sing, and learn the liberal arts.

It hap'd, that perching on the parlour-beam,
Amidst his wives, he had a deadly dream,
Just at the dawn; and sigh'd, and groan'd so fast,
As every breath he drew would be his last.
Dame Partlet, ever nearest to his side,
Heard all his piteous moan, and how he cried
For help from gods and men: and sore aghast
She peck'd and pull'd, and waken'd him at last.
'Dear heart,' said she, 'for love of heaven, declare
Your pain, and make me partner of your care.
You groan, sir, ever since the morning-light,
As something had disturb'd your noble spright.'

'And, madam, well I might,' said Chanticleer,
'Never was Shrovetide cock in such a fear.

Ev'n still I run all over in a sweat,
My princely senses not recover'd yet.
For such a dream I had of dire portent,
That much I fear my body will be shent;
It bodes I shall have wars and woful strife,
Or in a loathsome dungeon end my life.
Know, dame, I dreamt within my troubled breast,
That in our yard I saw a murderous beast,
That on my body would have made arrest.
With waking ~~eyes I ne'er~~ beheld his fellow,
His colour was betwixt a red and yellow:
Tip'd was his tail, and both his pricking ears
With black, and much unlike his other hairs:
The rest, in shape a beagle's whelp throughout,
With broader forehead, and a sharper snout:
Deep in his front was sunk his glowing eyes;
That yet methinks I see him with surprise.
Reach out your hand, I drop with clammy sweat,
And lay it to my heart, and feel it beat.'

'Now, fie for shame!' quoth she, 'by heaven above,
Thou hast for ever lost thy lady's love;
No woman can endure a recreant knight,
He must be bold by day, and free by night.
Our sex desires a husband, or a friend,
Who can our honour and his own defend;
Wise, hardy, secret, liberal of his purse:
A fool is nauseous, but a coward worse:
No bragging coxcomb, yet no baffled knight.
How dar'st thou talk of love, and dar'st not fight?
How dar'st thou tell thy dame thou art afeard?
Hast thou no manly heart, and hast a beard?

If aught from fearful dreams may be divin'd,
They signify a cock of dunghill-kind.
All dreams, as in old Galen I have read,
Are from repletion and complexion bred;
From rising fumes of indigested food,
And noxious humours that infect the blood:
And sure, my lord, if I can read aright,
These foolish fancies you have had to night
Are certain symptoms (in the canting style)
Of boiling choler, and abounding bile:
This yellow gall that in your stomach floats,
Engenders all these visionary thoughts.
When choler overflows, then dreams are bred
Of flames, and all the family of red:
Red dragons, and red beasts in sleep we view;
For humours are distinguish'd by their hue.
From hence we dream of wars and warlike things,
And wasps and hornets with their double wings.
Choler adust congeals our blood with fear;
Then black bulls toss us, and black devils tear.
In sanguine airy dreams aloft we bound,
With rheums oppress'd we sink in rivers drown'd.

'More I could say, but thus conclude my theme:
The dominating humour makes the dream.
Cato was in his time accounted wise,
And he condemns them all for empty lies.
Take my advice, and when we fly to ground,
With laxatives preserve your body sound,
And purge the pecant humours that abound.
I should be loath to lay you on a bier;
And though there lives no 'pothecary near,

I dare for once prescribe for your disease,
And save long bills, and a damn'd doctor's fees.

'Two sovereign herbs, which I by practice know,
And both at hand, (for in our yard they grow)
On peril of my soul shall rid you wholly
Of yellow choler, and of melancholy:
You must both purge and vomit; but obey,
And for the love of heaven make no delay.
Since hot and dry in your complexion join,
Beware the sun when in a vernal sign:
For when he mounts exalted in the ram,
If then he finds your body in a flame,
Replete with choler; I dare lay a groat,
A tertian ague is at least your lot:
Perhaps a fever (which the gods forefend!)
May bring your youth to some untimely end.
And therefore, sir, as you desire to live,
A day or two before your laxative,
Take just three worms, nor under nor above,
Because the gods unequal numbers love.
These digestives prepare you for your purge,
Of fumatory, centaury, and spurge,
And of ground-ivy add a leaf or two,
All which within our yard or garden grow:
Eat these, and be, my lord, of better cheer;
Your father's son was never born to fear.'

'Madam, (quoth he) gramercy for your care;
But Cato, whom you quoted, you may spare.
'Tis true, a wise and worthy man he seems,
And, (as you say) gave no belief to dreams:

But other men of more authority,
And, by the' immortal pow'rs! as wise as he,
Maintain, with sounder sense, that dreams forbode;
For Homer plainly says they come from God.
Nor Cato said it; but some modern fool
Impos'd in Cato's name on boys at school.

'Believe me, madam, morning dreams foreshow
The' events of things, and future weal or woe:
Some truths are not by reason to be tried,
But we have sure experience for our guide.
An Ancient author*, equal with the best,
Relates this tale of dreams among the rest:

'Two friends, or brothers, with devout intent,
On some far pilgrimage together went.
It happen'd so that when the sun was down,
They just arriv'd by twilight at a town:
That day had been the baiting of a bull,
'Twas at a feast, and every inn so full,
That no void room in chamber, or on ground,
And but one sorry bed was to be found;
And that so little it would hold but one,
Though till this hour they never lay alone.

'So were they forc'd to part; one stay'd behind,
His fellow sought what lodgings he could find:
At last he found a stall where oxen stood,
And that he rather chose than lie abroad.
'Twas in a further yard without a door,
But for his ease, well litter'd was the floor.

* Cicero: in his treatise *De Divinatione*.

His fellow, who the narrow bed had kept,
Was weary, and without a rocker slept:
Supine he snor'd; but in the dead of night,
He dreamt his friend appear'd before his sight,
Who with a ghastly look and doleful cry,
Said, "help me, brother, or this night I die!
Arise, and help, before all help be vain,
Or in an ox's stall I shall be slain!"

Rous'd from his rest, he waken'd in a start,
Shivering with horror, and with aching heart;
At length to cure himself by reason tries:
'Twas but a dream, and what are dreams but lies!
So thinking, chang'd his side, and clos'd his eyes.
His dream returns; his friend appears again,
"The murderers come: now help, or I am slain!"
'Twas but a vision still, and visions are but vain.
He dreamt the third: but now his friend appear'd,
Pale, naked, pierc'd with wounds, with blood besmear'd:
"Thrice warn'd, awake!" said he, "relief is late,
The deed is done; but thou revenge my fate!
Tardy of aid, unseal thy heavy eyes,
Awake, and with the dawning day arise:
Take to the western gate thy ready way,
For by that passage they my corpse convey:
My corpse is in a tumbril laid, among
The filth and ordure, and enclos'd with dung.
That cart arrest, and raise a common cry;
For sacred hunger of my gold I die!"

Then show'd his grisly wound; and last he drew
A piteous sigh; and took a long adieu!

'The frighted friend arose by break of day,
And found the stall where late his fellow lay.
Then of his impious host inquiring more,
Was answer'd that his guest was gone before:
"Muttering he went," said he, "by morning-light,
And much complain'd of his ill rest by night."
This rais'd suspicion in the pilgrim's mind;
Because all hosts are of an evil kind,
And oft, to share the spoil, with robbers join'd.

'His dream confirm'd his thought: with troubled look
Straight to the western-gate his way he took;
There, as his dream foretold, a cart he found,
That carried compost forth to dung the ground.
This when the pilgrim saw, he stretch'd his throat,
And cry'd out "Murder!" with a yelling note;
"My murder'd fellow in this cart lies dead,
Vengeance and justice on the villain's head!
You, magistrates, who sacred laws dispense,
On you I call to punish this offence!"

'The word thus given, within a little space,
The mob came roaring out, and throng'd the place.
All in a trice they cast the cart to ground,
And in the dung the murder'd body found,
Though breathless, warm, and reeking from the wound.
Good Heaven, whose darling attribute we find,
Is boundless grace and mercy to mankind,

Abhors the cruel; and the deeds of night
By wondrous ways reveals in open light:
Murder may pass unpunish'd for a time,
But tardy justice will o'ertake the crime:
And oft a speedier pain the guilty feels;
The hue and cry of Heaven pursues him at the heels,
Fresh from the fact; as in the present case:
The criminals are seiz'd upon the place:
Carter and Host confronted face to face.
Stiff in denial, as the law appoints,
On engines they distend their tortur'd joints:
So was confession forc'd, the' offence was known,
And public justice on the' offenders done.

'Here may you see that visions are to dread;
And in the page that follows this, I read
Of two young merchants, whom the hope of gain
Induc'd in partnership to cross the main:
Waiting till willing winds their sails supplied,
Within a trading-town they long abide,
Full fairly situate on a haven's side.

'One evening it befel, that looking out,
The wind they long had wish'd was come about.
Well pleas'd they went to rest, and, if the gale
Till morn continued, both resolv'd to sail.
But as together in a bed they lay,
The younger had a dream at break of day.
A man, he thought, stood frowning at his side,
Who warn'd him for his safety to provide,
Nor put to sea, but safe on shore abide.

"I come, thy genius, to command thy stay;
Trust not the winds, for fatal is the day,
And death, unhop'd, attends the watery way."

'The vision said, and vanish'd from his sight:
The dreamer waken'd in a mortal fright;
Then pull'd his drowsy neighbour, and declar'd
What in his slumber he had seen and heard.
His friend smil'd scornful, and with proud contempt,
Rejects as idle what his fellow dreamt:
"Stay, who will stay: for me no fears restrain,
Who follow Mercury, the god of gain:
Let each man do as to his fancy seems,
I wait, not I, till you have better dreams.
Dreams are but interludes, which fancy makes;
When monarch-reason sleeps, this mimic wakes:
Compounds a medley of disjointed things,
A mob of coblers, and a court of kings:
Light fumes are merry, grosser fumes are sad;
Both are the reasonable soul run mad:
And many monstrous forms in sleep we see,
That neither were, nor are, nor e'er can be.
Sometimes, forgotten things long cast behind
Rush forward in the brain, and come to mind;
The nurse's legends are for truths receiv'd,
And the man dreams but what the boy believ'd.
Sometimes we but rehearse a former play,
The night restores our actions done by day;
As hounds in sleep will open for their prey.
In short, the farce of dreams is of a piece,
Chimeras all, and more absurd, or less:

You, who believe in tales, abide alone;
Whate'er I get this voyage, is my own.'

'Thus while he spoke, he heard the shouting crew
That call'd aboard, and took his last adieu!
The vessel went before a merry gale,
And for quick passage put on every sail:
But when least fear'd, and ev'n in open day,
The mischief overtook her in the way:
Whether she sprung a leak, I cannot find,
Or whether she was overset with wind,
Or that some rock below her bottom rent;
But down at once with all her crew she went:
Her fellow-ships from far her loss descried;
But only she was sunk, and all were safe beside.

'By this example you are taught again,
That dreams and visions are not always vain.
But if, dear Partlet, you are yet in doubt,
Another tale shall make the former out.

'Kenelm, the son of Kenulph, Mercia's king,
Whose holy life the legends loudly sing,*
Warn'd in a dream, his murder did foretel
From point to point, as after it befel:
All circumstances to his nurse he told,
(A wonder, from a child of seven years old:)
The dream with horror heard, the good old wife
From treason counsell'd him to guard his life;
But close to keep the secret in his mind,
For a boy's vision small belief would find.

* The legends record him as a martyr. He was murdered by his sister Quendreda, when only seven years old.

The pious ehild, by promise bound, obey'd;
Nor was the fatal murder long delay'd:
By Quenda slain, he fell before his time,
Made a young martyr by his sister's crime.
The tale is told by venerable Bede,
Which, at your better leisure, you may read.

'Macrobius, too, relates the vision sent
To the great Scipio, with the fam'd event.
Objection makes, but after makes replies,
And adds, that dreams are often prophecies.

'Of Daniel, you may read in holy writ,
Who, when the king his vision did forget,
Could word for word the wondrous dream repeat.
Nor less of patriareh Joseph understand,
Who by a dream inslav'd the' Egyptian land,
The years of plenty and of dearth foretold,
When, for their bread, their liberty they sold.
Nor must the' exalted butler be forgot;
Nor he whose dream presag'd his hanging lot.

'And did not Crœsus the same death foresee,
Rais'd in a vision on a lofty tree?
The wife of hector, in his utmost pride,
Dreamt of his death the night before he died:
Well was he warn'd from battle to refrain,
But men to death deereed are warn'd in vain:
He dar'd the dream, and by his fatal foe was slain.

'Much more I know, which I forbear to speak;
For see, the ruddy day begins to break:

Let this suffice, that plainly I forcsee
My dream was bad, and bodes adversity:
But neither pills nor laxatives I like,
They only serve to make a well man sick:
Of these his gain the sharp physician makes,
And often gives a purge, but seldom takes:
They not correct, but poison all the blood,
And ne'er did any but the doctors good.
Their tribe, trade, trinkets, I defy them all,
With every work of 'pothecary's hall.

'These melancholy matters I forbear:
But let me tell thee, Partlet mine, and swear,
That when I view the beauties of thy face,
I fear not death, nor dangers, nor disgrace:
So may my soul have bliss, as when I spy
The scarlet red about thy partridge eye,
While thou art constant to thy own true knight,
While thou art mine, and I am thy delight,
All sorrows at thy presence take their flight.
For true it is, as *in principio*,
Mulier est hominis confusio.
Madam, the meaning of this Latin is,
That *woman is to man his sovereign bliss.*
For when by night I feel your tender side,
Though for the narrow perch I cannot ride,
Yet I have such a solace in my mind,
That all my boding cares are cast behind;
And ev'n already I forget my dream:'—
He said, and downward flew from off the beam.
For day-light now began apace to spring,
The thrush to whistle, and the lark to sing.

Then crowing, clap'd his wings; the' appointed call
To chuck his wives together in the hall.

By this the widow had unbarr'd the door,
And Chanticleer went strutting out before,
With royal courage, and with heart so light,
As show'd he scorn'd the visions of the night.
Now roaming in the yard he spurn'd the ground,
And gave to Partlet the first grain he found.
Then often feather'd her with wanton play,
And trod her twenty times ere prime of day;
And took by turns and gave so much delight,
Her sisters pin'd with envy at the sight.

He chuck'd again, when other corns he found,
And scarcely deign'd to set a foot to ground;
But swagger'd like a lord about his hall,
And his seven wives came running at his call.

'Twas now the month in which the world began,
(If March beheld the first created man:)
And since the vernal equinox, the sun,
In Aries twelve degrees, or more, had run;
When casting up his eyes against the light,
Both month, and day, and hour he measur'd right,
And told more truly than the' ephemeris;
For art may err, but nature cannot miss.

Thus numbering times and seasons in his breast,
His second crowing the third hour confess'd:
Then turning, said to Partlet, 'See, my dear,
How lavish nature has adorn'd the year;

How the pale primrose and blue violet spring,
And birds essay their throats, disus'd to sing:
All these are ours; and I with pleasure see
Man strutting on two legs, and aping me!
An unfledg'd creature, of a lumpish frame,
Endued with fewer particles of flame:
Our dame sits couring o'er a kitchen-fire,
I draw fresh air, and nature's works admire:
And ev'n this day, in more delight abound,
Than since I was an egg I ever found.'

The time shall come when Chanticleer shall wish
His words unsaid, and hate his boasted bliss:
The crested bird shall by experience know,
Jove made not him his masterpiece below;
And learn the latter end of joy is woe.
The vessel of his bliss to dregs is run,
And Heaven will have him taste his other tun.

Ye wise, draw near, and hearken to my tale,
Which proves that oft the proud by flattery fail:
The legend is as true I undertake
As Tristran is, and Launcelot of the Lake:
Which all our ladies in such reverence hold,
As if in book of martyrs it were told.

A fox full fraught with seeming sanctity,
That fear'd an oath, but like the devil would lie;
Who look'd like Lent, and had the holy leer,
And durst not sin before he said his pray'r:
This pious cheat, that never suck'd the blood,
Nor chew'd the flesh of lambs, but when he could;
Had pass'd three summers in the neighbouring wood:

And musing long whom next to circumvent,
On Chantieleer his wicked fancy bent:
And in his high imagination cast
By stratagem to gratify his taste.

The plot contriv'd, before the break of day,
Saint Reynard through the hedge had made his way:
The pale was next, but proudly with a bound
He leapt the fence of the forbidden ground:
Yet, fearing to be seen, within a bed
Of coleworts he conceal'd his wily head;
There skulk'd till afternoon, and watch'd his time
(As murderers use) to perpetrate his crime.
O hypocrite! ingenious to destroy;
O traitor, worse than Sinon was to Troy!
O vile subverter of the Gallic reign,
More false than Gano was to Charlemaign!
O Chanticleer, in an unhappy hour
Didst thou forsake the safety of thy bow'r!
Better for thee thou hadst believ'd thy dream,
And not that day descended from the beam!

But here the doctors eagerly dispute:
Some hold predestination absolute:
Some clerks maintain, that Heaven at first foresees,
And in the virtue of foresight decrees.
If this be so, then prescience binds the will,
And mortals are not free to good or ill:
For what he first foresaw, he must ordain,
Or its eternal prescience may be vain:
As bad for us as prescience had not been;
For first, or last, he's author of the sin.
And who says that, let the blaspheming man
Say worse ev'n of the devil, if he can.

For how can that Eternal Power be just
To punish man, who sins because he must?
Or how can he reward a virtuous deed,
Which is not done by us, but first decreed?

I cannot bolt this matter to the bran,
As Bradwardin* and holy Austin can:
If prescience can determine actions so
That we must do, because he did foreknow;
Or that foreknowing, yet our choice is free,
Not forc'd to sin by strict necessity:
This strict necessity they simple call,
Another sort there is conditional.
The first so binds the will, that things foreknown,
By spontaneity, not choice, are done.
Thus galley-slaves tug willing at their oar,
Consent to work, in prospect of the shore;
But would not work at all, if not constrain'd before.
That other does not liberty constrain,
But man may either act, or may refrain.
Heaven made us agents free to good or ill,
And forc'd it not, though he foresaw the will.
Freedom was first bestow'd on human race,
And prescience only held the second place.

* Thomas Bradwardin was elected Archbishop of Canterbury in 1348. He had the character of a great philosopher and mathematician, and was so eminent a divine as to be called *Doctor Profundus*. Austin, or Augustine, was the first Archbishop of Canterbury.

If he could make such agents wholly free,
I not dispute; the point's too high for me: [sound,
For Heaven's unfathom'd power what man can
Or put to his Omnipotence a bound?
He made us to his image, all agree;
That image is the soul, and that must be
Or not the maker's image, or be free.

But whether it were better man had been
By nature bound to good, not free to sin,
I wave, for fear of splitting on a rock.
The tale I tell is only of a cock;
Who had not run the hazard of his life,
Had he believ'd his dream, and not his wife:
For women, with a mischief to their kind,
Pervert, with bad advice, our better mind.
A woman's counsel brought us first to woe,
And made her man his Paradise forego,
Where at heart's ease he liv'd; and might have been
As free from sorrow as he was from sin.
For what the devil had their sex to do,
That, born to folly, they presum'd to know,
And could not see the serpent in the grass?
But I myself presume, and let it pass.

'Silence in times of suffering is the best,
'Tis dangerous to disturb a hornet's nest.
In other authors you may find enough,
But all they say of dames is idle stuff.
Legends of lying wits together bound,
The wife of Bath would throw 'em to the ground.'

These are the words of Chanticleer, not mine,
I honour dames, and think their sex divine.

Now to continue what my tale begun:
Lay madam Partlet basking in the sun,
Breast-high in sand: her sisters in a row,
Enjoy'd the beams above, the warmth below.
The cock, that of his flesh was ever free,
Sung merrier than the mermaid in the sea:
And so befel, that as he cast his eye,
Among the coleworts on a butterfly,
He saw false Reynard, where he lay full low,
I need not swear he had no list to crow:
But cried, 'Cock, Cock!' and gave a sudden start,
As sore dismay'd and frighted at his heart.
For birds and beasts, inform'd by nature, know
Kinds opposite to theirs, and fly their foe:
So Chanticleer, who never saw a fox,
Yet shun'd him as a sailor shuns the rocks.

But the false loon, who could not work his will
By open force, employ'd his flattering skill:
'I hope, my lord,' said he, 'I not offend;
Are you afraid of me, that am your friend?
I were a beast indeed to do you wrong,
I, who have lov'd and honour'd you so long;
Stay, gentle sir, nor take a false alarm,
For, on my soul, I never meant you harm.
I come no spy, nor as a traitor press
To learn the secrets of your soft recess:
Far be from Reynard so profane a thought,
But by the sweetness of your voice was brought:

For, as I bid my beads, by chance I heard
The song as of an angel in the yard:
A song that would have charm'd the' infernal gods,
And banish'd horror from the dark abodes:
Had Orpheus sung it in the nether sphere,
So much the hymn had pleas'd the tyrant's ear,
The wife had been detain'd, to keep the husband there.

'My lord, your sire familiarly I knew,
A peer deserving such a son as you:
He, with your lady-mother (whom Heav'n rest?)
Has often grac'd my house, and been my guest.
To view his living features does me good,
For I am your poor neighbour in the wood;
And in my cottage should be proud to see
The worthy heir of my friend's family.

'But since I speak of singing, let me say,
As with an upright heart I safely may,
That, save yourself, there breathes not on the ground,
One like your father for a silver-sound.
So sweetly would he wake the winter day,
That matrons to the church mistook their way,
And thought they heard the merry organ play.
And he to raise his voice with artful care,
(What will not beaux attempt to please the fair?)
On tiptoe stood to sing with greater strength,
And stretch'd his comely neck at all the length:
And while he strain'd his voice to pierce the skies,
As saints in raptures use, would shut his eyes,

That the sound striving through the narrow throat,
His winking might avail, to mend the note.
By this, in song, he never had his peer,
From sweet Cecilia down to Chanticleer;
Not Maro's muse who sung 'the mighty man,'
Nor Pindar's heavenly lyre, nor Horace when a swan.
Your ancestors proceed from race divine,
From Brennus and Belinus is your line,
Who gave to sovereign Rome such loud alarms,
That ev'n the priests were not excus'd from arms.

'Besides, a famous monk* of modern times,
Has left of cocks recorded in his rhymes,
That of a parish-priest the son and heir,
(When sons of priests were from the proverb clear)
Affronted once a cock of noble kind,
And either lam'd his legs, or struck him blind;
For which the clerk his father was disgrac'd,
And in his benefice another plac'd.
Now sing, my lord, if not for love of me,
Yet for the sake of sweet saint Charity;
Make hills and dales, and earth and heaven rejoice,
And emulate your father's angel voice.'

The cock was pleas'd to hear him speak so fair,
And proud beside, as solar people are:
Nor could the treason from the truth descry,
So was he ravish'd with this flattery:
So much the more, as from a little elf
He had a high opinion of himself:

* Nigellus Wireker, in *Speculum Stultorum.*

Though sickly, slender, and not large of limb;
Concluding all the world was made for him.

Ye princes rais'd by poets to the gods,
And Alexander'd up in lying odes,
Believe not every flattering knave's report,
There's many a Reynard lurking in the court;
And he shall be receiv'd with more regard
And listen'd to, than modest truth is heard.

This Chanticleer, of whom the story sings,
Stood high upon his toes, and clap'd his wings;
Then stretch'd his neck, and wink'd with both his eyes,
Ambitious, as he sought the' Olympic prize,
But while he pain'd himself to raise his note,
False Reynard rush'd, and caught him by the throat:
Then on his back he laid the precious load,
And sought his wonted shelter of the wood;
Swiftly he made his way, the mischief done,
Of all unheeded, and pursued by none.

Alas! what stay is there in human state,
Or who can shun inevitable fate?
The doom was written, the decree was past,
Ere the foundations of the world were cast!
In Aries though the sun exalted stood,
His patron-planet to procure his good;
Yet Saturn was his mortal foe, and he
In Libra rais'd, oppos'd the same degree:
The rays both good and bad, of equal pow'r,
Each thwarting other, made a mingled hour.

On Friday morn he dreamt this direful dream,
Cross to the worthy native, in his scheme!
Ah, blissful Venus, goddess of delight,
How couldst thou suffer thy devoted knight
On thy own day to fall by foe oppress'd,
The wight of all the world who serv'd thee best?
Who, true to love, was all for recreation,
And minded not the work of propagation.
Gaufride,* who couldst so well in rhyme complain
The death of Richard, with an arrow slain;
Why had not I thy muse, or thou my heart,
To sing this heavy dirge with equal art!
That I like thee of Friday might complain;
For on that day was Cœur de Lion slain.

Not louder cries when Ilium was in flames,
Were sent to heaven by woful Trojan dames,
When Pyrrhus toss'd on high his burnish'd blade,
And offer'd Priam to his father's shade,
Than for the cock the widow'd poultry made.
Fair Partlet first, when he was borne from sight,
With sovereign shrieks bewail'd her captive knight,
Far louder than the Carthaginian wife,
When Asdrubal, her husband, lost his life;
When she beheld the smouldring flames ascend,
And all the Punic glories at an end:
Willing into the fires she plung'd her head,
With greater ease than others seek their bed.
Not more aghast the matrons of renown,
When tyrant Nero burnt the imperial town.

* Or Geoffrey de Vinsauf, a Norman historian.

Shriek'd for the downfal in a doleful cry,
For which their guilty lords were doom'd to die.

Now to my story I return again:
The trembling widow, and her daughters twain,
This woful cackling cry with horror heard,
Of those distracted damsels in the yard;
And starting up beheld the heavy sight,
How Reynard to the forest took his flight,
And cross his back, as in triumphant scorn,
The hope and pillar of the house was borne.

'The fox, the wicked fox!' was all the cry;
Out from his house ran every neighbour nigh:
The vicar first, and after him the crew,
With forks and staves the felon to pursue.
Ran Coll our dog, and Talbot with the band,
And Malkin, with her distaff in her hand:
Ran cow and calf, and family of hogs,
In panic horror of pursuing dogs,
With many a deadly grunt and doleful squeak,
Poor swine! as if their pretty hearts would break.
The shouts of men, the women in dismay,
With shrieks augment the terror of the day.
The ducks that heard the proclamation cried,
And fear'd a persecution might betide,
Full twenty miles from town their voyage take,
Obscure in rushes of the liquid lake.
The geese fly o'er the barn; the bees in arms,
Drive headlong from the waxen cells in swarms.
Jack Straw at London-stone, with all his rout,
Struck not the city with so loud a shout:

Not when with English hate they did pursue
A Frenchman, or an unbelieving Jew:
Not when the welkin rung with 'one and all;'
And echoes bounded back from Fox's hall;
Earth seem'd to sink beneath, and heaven above to fall!
With might and main they chas'd the murderous fox,
With brazen trumpets, and inflated box,
To kindle Mars with military sounds;
Nor wanted horns to' inspire sagacious hounds.

But see how fortune can confound the wise,
And, when they least expect it, turn the dice.
The captive cock, who scarce could draw his breath,
And lay within the very jaws of death;
Yet in this agony his fancy wrought,
And fear supplied him with this happy thought:
'Yours is the prize, victorious prince!' said he,
'The vicar my defeat, and all the village see.
Enjoy your friendly fortune while you may,
And bid the churls, that envy you the prey,
Call back their mungril curs, and cease their cry;
See, fools, the shelter of the wood is nigh,
And Chanticleer in your despite shall die:
He shall be pluck'd, and eaten to the bone.'
''Tis well advis'd; in faith, it shall be done!'
This Reynard said: but as the word he spoke,
The prisoner with a spring from prison broke:
Then stretch'd his feather'd fans with all his might,
And to the neighbouring maple wing'd his flight.

Whom when the traitor safe on tree beheld,
He curs'd the gods, with shame and sorrow fill'd;
Shame for his folly, sorrow out of time,
For plotting an unprofitable crime:
Yet mastering both, the' artificer of lies
Renews the' assault, and his last battery tries.

'Though I,' said he, 'did ne'er in thought offend,
How justly may my lord suspect his friend?
The' appearance is against me, I confess,
Who seemingly have put you in distress:
You, if your goodness does not plead my cause,
May think I broke all hospitable laws,
To bear you from your palace yard by might,
And put your noble person in a fright:
This, since you take it ill, I must repent,
Though heaven can witness, with no bad intent;
I practis'd it, to make you taste your cheer
With double pleasure, first prepar'd by fear.
So loyal subjects often seize their prince,
Forc'd (for his good) to seeming violence,
Yet mean his sacred person not the least offence.
Descend; so help me Jove! as you shall find
That Reynard comes of no dissembling kind.'

'Nay,' quoth the cock, 'but I beshrew us both,
If I believe a saint upon his oath:
An honest man may take a knave's advice,
But idiots only may be cozen'd twice.
Once warn'd is well bewar'd: not flattering lies
Shall soothe me more to sing with winking eyes
And open mouth, for fear of catching flies.

Who blindfold walks upon a river's brim,
When he should see, has he deserv'd to swim?'
'Better, sir cock, let all contention cease;
Come down,' said Reynard, 'let us treat of peace.'
'A peace, with all my soul;' said Chanticleer:
'But, with your favour, I will treat it here:
And lest the truce with treason should be mixt,
'Tis my concern to have the tree betwixt.'

THE MORAL.

In this plain fable you the' effect may see
Of negligence and fond credulity:
And learn besides of flatterers to beware,
Then most pernicious when they speak too fair.
The cock and fox, the fool and knave imply;
The truth is moral, though the tale a lie.
Who spoke in parables, I need not say;
But sure he knew it was a pleasing way,
Sound sense by plain example to convey,
And in a heathen author we may find,
That pleasure with instruction should be join'd:
To take the corn, and leave the chaff behind.

THEODORE AND HONORIA.

FROM

BOCCACE.

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FROM

BOCCACE.

Of all the cities in Romanian lands,
The chief and most renown'd Ravenna stands:
Adorn'd in ancient times with arms and arts,
And rich inhabitants, with generous hearts.
But Theodore the brave, above the rest,
With gifts of fortune and of nature bless'd,
The foremost place for wealth and honour held,
And in all feats of chivalry excell'd.

This noble youth to madness lov'd a dame
Of high degree, Honoria was her name:
Fair as the fairest, but of haughty mind,
And fiercer than became so soft a kind:
Proud of her birth, (for equal she had none,)
The rest she scorn'd; but hated him alone.
His gifts, his constant courtship, nothing gain'd;
For she, the more he lov'd, the more disdain'd:
He liv'd with all the pomp he cou'd devise,
At tilts and tournaments obtain'd the prize,
But found no favour in his lady's eyes:

Relentless as a rock, the lofty maid
Turn'd all to poison that he did or said:
Nor pray'rs, nor tears, nor offer'd vows could move;
The work went backward; and the more he strove
To' advance his suit, the further from her love.

Wearied at length, and wanting remedy,
He doubted oft, and oft resolv'd to die,
But pride stood ready to prevent the blow;
For who would die to gratify a foe?
His generous mind disdain'd so mean a fate;
That pass'd, his next endeavour was to hate.
But vainer that relief than all the rest,
The less he hop'd, with more desire possess'd;
Love stood the siege, and would not yield his breast.
Change was the next, but change deceiv'd his care;
He sought a fairer, but found none so fair.
He would have worn her out by slow degrees,
As men by fasting starv'd the' untam'd disease:
But present love requir'd a present ease.
Looking, he feeds alone his famish'd eyes,
Feeds lingering death; but looking not, he dies.
Yet still he chose the longest way to fate,
Wasting at once his life and his estate.

His friends beheld, and pitied him in vain;
For what advice can ease a lover's pain!
Absence, the best expedient they could find,
Might save the fortune, if not cure the mind.

This means they long propos'd, but little gain'd;
Yet after after much pursuit, at length obtain'd.

Hard you may think it was to give consent,
But, struggling with his own desires, he went:
With large expense, and with a pompous train,
Provided as to visit France or Spain,
Or for some distant voyage o'er the main.
But love had clip'd his wings, and cut him short;
Confin'd within the purlieus of his court:
Three miles he went, no further could retreat;
His travels ended at his country seat.
To Chassis' pleasing plains he took his way,
There pitch'd his tents, and there resolv'd to stay.

The spring was in the prime; the neighbouring grove
Supplied with birds, the choristers of love;
Music unbought, that minister'd delight
To morning walks, and lull'd his cares by night.
There he discharg'd his friends; but not the' expense
Of frequent treats, and proud magnificence.
He liv'd as kings retire, though more at large
From public business, yet with equal charge;
With house and heart still open to receive;
As well content, as love would give him leave;
He would have liv'd more free; but many a guest
Who could forsake the friend, pursued the feast.

It hap'd one morning, as his fancy led,
Before his usual hour he left his bed,
To walk within a lonely lawn, that stood
On every side surrounded by the wood:

Alone he walk'd, to please his pensive mind,
And sought the deepest solitude to find:
'Twas in a grove of spreading pines he stray'd;
The winds within the quivering branches play'd,
And dancing trees a mournful music made.
The place itself was suiting to his care,
Uncouth and savage, as the cruel fair,
He wander'd on, unknowing where he went,
Lost in the wood, and all on love intent.
The day already half his race had run,
And summon'd him to due repast at noon;
But love could feel no hunger but his own.

Whilst listening to the murmuring leaves he stood,
More than a mile immers'd within the wood,
At once the wind was laid; the whispering sound
Was dumb: a rising earthquake rock'd the ground!
With deeper brown the grove was overspread:
A sudden horror seiz'd his giddy head,
And his ears tinkled, and his colour fled.
Nature was in alarm; some danger nigh
Seem'd threaten'd, though unseen to mortal eye.
Unus'd to fear, he summon'd all his soul,
And stood collected in himself, and whole;
Not long; for soon a whirlwind rose around,
And from afar he heard a screaming sound,
As of a dame distress'd, who cried for aid,
And fill'd with loud laments the secret shade.
A thicket close beside the grove there stood,
With briers and brambles chok'd, and dwarfish wood:
From thence the noise, which now approaching near,
With more distinguish'd notes invades his ear.

He rais'd his head, and saw a beauteous maid,
With hair dishevell'd, issuing through the shade;
Strip'd of her clothes, and e'en those parts reveal'd
Which modest nature keeps from sight conceal'd.
Her face, her hands, her naked limbs were torn,
With passing through the brakes, and prickly thorn:
Two mastiffs grim and gaunt her flight pursued,
And oft their fasten'd fangs in blood imbrued:
Oft they came up, and pinch'd her tender side,
'Mercy, O mercy, Heaven!' she ran, and cried;
When Heaven was nam'd, they loos'd their hold again;
Then sprung she forth, they follow'd her amain.

Not far behind, a knight of swarthy face,
High on a coal-black steed pursued the chase;
With flashing flames his ardent eyes were fill'd.
And in his hands a naked sword he held:
He cheer'd the dogs to follow her who fled,
And vow'd revenge on her devoted head.

As Theodore was born of noble kind,
The brutal action rous'd his manly mind:
Mov'd with unworthy usage of the maid,
He, though unarm'd, resolv'd to give her aid.
A sapling pine he wrench'd from out the ground,
The readiest weapon that his fury found.
Thus furnish'd for offence, he cross'd the way
Betwixt the graceless villain and his prey.

The knight came thundering on, but from afar,
Thus, in imperious tone, forbad the war:

'Cease, Theodore, to proffer vain relief,
Nor stop the vengeance of so just a grief;
But give me leave to seize my destin'd prey,
And let eternal justice take the way!
I but revenge my fate; disdain'd, betray'd,
And suffering death for this ungrateful maid.

He said; at once dismounting from the steed;
For now the hell-hounds, with superior speed,
Had reach'd the dame; and fastening on her side,
The ground with issuing streams of purple dyed.
Stood Theodore surpris'd in deadly fright,
With chattering teeth and bristling hair upright;
Yet arm'd with inborn worth, 'Whate'er,' said he,
'Thou art, who know'st me better than I thee;
Or prove thy rightful cause, or be defied!'
The spectre, fiercely staring, thus replied:—

'Know, Theodore, thy ancestry I claim,
And Guido Cavalcanti was my name:
One common sire our fathers did beget;
My name and story some remember yet.
Thee, when a boy, within my arms I laid,
When, for my sins, I lov'd this haughty maid;
Not less ador'd in life, nor serv'd by me,
Than proud Honoria now is lov'd by thee.
What did I not her stubborn heart to gain?
But all my vows were answer'd with disdain;
She scorn'd my sorrows, and despis'd my pain.
Long time I drag'd my days in fruitless care;
Then loathing life, and plung'd in deep despair,

To finish my unhappy life, I fell
On this sharp sword, and now am damn'd in hell.
Short was her joy; for soon the' insulting maid,
By Heaven's decree, in the cold grave was laid;
And as in unrepented sin she died,
Doom'd to the same bad place, is punish'd for her pride;
Because she deem'd I well deserv'd to die,
And made a merit of her cruelty.
There, then, we met; both tried, and both were cast,
And this irrevocable sentence pass'd;
That she whom I so long pursued in vain,
Should suffer from my hands a lingering pain:
Renew'd to life, that she might daily die,
I daily doom'd to follow, she to fly:
No more a lover, but a mortal foe,
I seek her life, (for love is none below.)
As often as my dogs with better speed
Arrest her flight, is she to death decreed.
Then with this fatal sword, on which I died,
I pierce her open'd back or tender side,
And tear that harden'd heart from out her breast,
Which, with her entrails, makes my hungry hounds a feast.
Nor lies she long, but as her fates ordain,
Springs up to life, and fresh to second pain,
Is sav'd to-day, to-morrow to be slain.'

This, vers'd in death, the' infernal knight relates,
And then for proof, fulfill'd their common fates;
Her heart and bowels through her back he drew,
And fed the hounds that help'd him to pursue.

Stern look'd the fiend, as frustrate of his will,
Not half suffic'd, and greedy yet to kill.
And now the soul expiring through the wound,
Had left the body breathless on the ground,
When thus the grisly spectre spoke again:
'Behold the fruit of ill-rewarded pain!
As many months as I sustain'd her hate,
So many years is she condemn'd by fate
To daily death; and every several place,
Conscious of her disdain, and my disgrace,
Must witness her just punishment, and be
A scene of triumph and revenge to me.
As in this grove I took my last farewell,
As on this very spot of earth I fell,
As Friday saw me die; so she my prey
Becomes ev'n here, on this revolving day.'

Thus while he spoke, the virgin from the ground
Upstarted fresh, already clos'd the wound;
And unconcern'd for all she felt before,
Precipitates her flight along the shore:
The hell-hounds, as ungorg'd with flesh and blood,
Pursue their prey, and seek their wonted food:
The fiend remounts his courser; mends his pace,
And all the vision vanish'd from the place.

Long stood the noble youth oppress'd with awe,
And stupid at the wondrous things he saw,
Surpassing common faith, transgressing nature's law.
He would have been asleep, and wish'd to wake;
But dreams, he knew, no long impression make,

Though strong at first: if vision, to what end,
But such as must his future state portend?
His love the damsel, and himself the fiend.
But yet, reflecting that it could not be
From Heaven, which cannot impious acts decree,
Resolv'd within himself to shun the snare
Which hell for his destruction did prepare;
And as his better genius should direct,
From an ill cause to draw a good effect.

Inspir'd from Heaven, he homeward took his way,
Nor pall'd his new design with long delay:
But of his train a trusty servant sent
To call his friends together at his tent.
They came; and usual salutations paid,
With words premeditated, thus he said:
'What you have often counsell'd, to remove
My vain pursuit of unregarded love;
By thrift my sinking fortune to repair,
Though late, yet is at last become my care:
My heart shall be my own; my vast expense
Reduc'd to bounds, by timely providence:
This only I require; invite for me
Honoria, with her father's family,
Her friends, and mine; the cause I shall display
On Friday next, for that's the' appointed day.'

Well pleas'd were all his friends; the task was light;
The father, mother, daughter they invite;
Hardly the dame was drawn to this repast;
But yet resolv'd, because it was the last.

The day was come; the guests invited came,
And, with the rest, the' inexorable dame:
A feast prepar'd with riotous expense,
Much cost, more care, and most magnificence.
The place ordain'd was in that haunted grove,
Where the revenging ghost pursued his love:
The tables in a proud pavilion spread,
With flowers below, and tissue over head:
The rest in rank; Honoria, chief in place,
Was artfully contriv'd to set her face
To front the thicket, and behold the chase.
The feast was serv'd; the time so well foreeast,
That just when the desert and fruits were plac'd,
The fiend's alarm began; the hollow sound
Sung in the leaves, the forest shook around,
Air blacken'd; roll'd the thunder; groan'd the ground.

Nor long before the loud laments arise,
Of one distress'd and mastiffs' mingled cries:
And first the dame came rushing through the wood,
And next the famish'd hounds that sought their food,
And grip'd her flanks, and oft essay'd their jaws in blood.
Last came the felon on the sable steed, [speed.
Arm'd with his naked sword, and urg'd his dogs to
She ran, and cried; her flight directly bent
(A guest unbidden) to the fatal tent,
The scene of death, and place ordain'd for punishment.

Loud was the noise, aghast was every guest,
The women shriek'd, the men forsook the feast;
The hounds at nearer distance hoarsely bay'd;
The hunter close pursued the visionary maid:
She rent the heaven with loud laments, imploring aid.

The gallants, to protect the lady's right,
Their faulchions brandish'd at the grisly sprite:
High on his stirrups he provok'd the fight;
Then on the crowd he cast a furious look,
And wither'd all their strength before he strook:
'Back, on your lives! let be,' said he, 'my prey,
And let my vengeance take the destin'd way.
Vain are your arms, and vainer your defence,
Against the' eternal doom of Providence:
Mine is the' ungrateful maid by Heaven design'd:
Mercy she would not give, nor mercy shall she find!'
At this the former tale again he told
With thundering tone, and dreadful to behold.
Sunk were their hearts with horror of the crime,
Nor needed to be warn'd a second time,
But bore each other back: some knew the face,
And all had heard the much-lamented case
Of him who fell for love, and this the fatal place.

And now the' infernal minister advanc'd,
Seiz'd the due victim, and with fury lanc'd
Her back, and piercing through her inmost heart,
Drew backward, as before, the' offending part.
The reeking entrails next he tore away,
And to his meagre mastiffs made a prey:

The pale assistants on each other star'd,
With gaping mouths for issuing words prepar'd;
The still-born sounds upon the palate hung,
And died imperfect on the faltering tongue.
The fright was general; but the female band
(A helpless train) in more confusion stand;
With horror shuddering, on a heap they run,
Sick at the sight of hateful justice done;
For conscience rung the alarm, and made the case their own.

So, spread upon a lake, with upward eye
A plump of fowl behold their foe on high;
They close their trembling troop, and all attend
On whom the sousing eagle will descend.

But most the proud Honoria fear'd the' event,
And thought to her alone the vision sent.
Her guilt presents to her distracted mind
Heaven's justice, Theodore's revengeful kind,
And the same fate to the same sin assign'd;
Already sees herself the monster's prey,
And feels her heart and entrails torn away.
'Twas a mute scene of sorrow, mix'd with fear,
Still on the table lay the' unfinish'd cheer;
The knight and hungry mastiffs stood around,
The mangled dame lay breathless on the ground:
When on a sudden, re-inspir'd with breath,
Again she rose, again to suffer death;
Nor stay'd the hell-hounds, nor the hunter stay'd,
But follow'd, as before, the flying maid:
The' avenger took from earth the' avenging sword,
And mounting light as air, his sable steed he spurr'd:

The clouds dispell'd, the sky resum'd her light,
And nature stood recover'd of her fright.

But fear, the last of ills, remain'd behind;
And horror heavy sat on every mind.
Nor Theodore encourag'd more his feast,
But sternly look'd, as hatching in his breast
Some deep design; which when Honoria view'd,
The fresh impulse her former fright renew'd;
She thought herself the trembling dame who fled,
And him the grisly ghost that spurr'd the' infernal steed:
The more dismay'd, for when the guests withdrew,
Their courteous host saluting all the crew,
Regardless pass'd her o'er; nor grac'd with kind adieu!
That sting infix'd within her haughty mind,
The downfal of her empire she divin'd;
And her proud heart with secret sorrow pin'd.
Home as they went, the sad discourse renew'd
Of the relentless dame to death pursued,
And of the sight obscene so lately view'd.
None durst arraign the righteous doom she bore,
Ev'n they who pitied most, yet blam'd her more:
The parallel they needed not to name,
But in the dead they damn'd the living dame.

At every little noise she look'd behind,
For still the night was present to her mind:
And anxious oft she started on the way,
And thought the horseman-ghost came thundering for his prey.

Return'd, she took her bed with little rest,
But in short slumbers dreamt the funeral feast:
Awak'd, she turn'd her side, and slept again;
The same black vapours mounted in her brain.
And the same dreams return'd with double pain.

Now forc'd to wake, because afraid to sleep,
Her blood all fever'd, with a furious leap
She sprung from bed, distracted in her mind;
And fear'd, at every step, a twitching sprite behind.
Darkling and desperate, with a staggering pace,
Of death afraid, and conscious of disgrace;
Fear, pride, remorse, at once her heart assail'd;
Pride put remorse to flight, but fear prevail'd.
Friday, the fatal day, when next it came,
Her soul forethought the fiend would change his game,
And her pursue, or Theodore be slain,
And two ghosts join their packs to hunt her o'er the plain.

This dreadful image so possess'd her mind,
That, desperate any succour else to find,
She ceas'd all further hope; and now began
To make reflection on the' unhappy man:
Rich, brave, and young, who past expression lov'd,
Proof to disdain, and not to be remov'd:
Of all the men respected and admir'd,
Of all the dames, except herself, desir'd.
Why not of her? prefer'd above the rest
By him with knightly deeds, and open love profess'd?
So had another been, where he his vows address'd.

This quell'd her pride; yet other doubts remain'd,
That once disdaining, she might be disdain'd.
The fear was just; but greater fear prevail'd,
Fear of her life by hellish hounds assail'd;
He took a louring leave; but who can tell,
What outward hate might inward love conceal?
Her sex's arts she knew, and why not then
Might deep dissembling have a place in men?
Here hope began to dawn; resolv'd to try,
She fix'd on this her utmost remedy;
Death was behind, but hard it was to die.
'Twas time enough at last on death to call,
The precipice in sight: a shrub was all
That kindly stood betwixt to break the fatal fall.

One maid she had, belov'd above the rest;
Secure of her, the secret she confess'd:
And now the cheerful light her fears dispell'd,
She with no winding turns the truth conceal'd,
But put the woman off, and stood reveal'd:
With fault confess'd, commission'd her to go,
If pity yet had place, and reconcile her foe.
The welcome message made, was soon receiv'd;
'Twas what he wish'd and hop'd, but scarce believ'd:
Fate seem'd a fair occasion to present,
He knew the sex, and fear'd she might repent,
Should he delay the moment of consent.
There yet remain'd to gain her friends, (a care
The modesty of maidens well might spare;)
But she with such a zeal the cause embrac'd,
(As women, where they will, are all in haste,)

That father, mother, and the kin beside,
Were overborne by fury of the tide:
With full consent of all, she chang'd her state,
Resistless in her love, as in her hate.

By her example warn'd, the rest beware;
More easy, less imperious, were the fair;
And that one hunting, which the devil design'd
For one fair female, lost him half the kind.

THE

FLOWER AND THE LEAF;

OR,

THE LADY IN THE ARBOUR.

A VISION.

FROM CHAUCER.

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FROM CHAUCER.

Now turning from the wintry signs, the sun
His course exalted through the Ram had run,
And whirling up the skies, his chariot drove
Through Taurus, and the lightsome realms of love;
Where Venus from her orb descends in show'rs
To glad the ground, and paint the fields with flow'rs:
When first the tender blades of grass appear,
And buds, that yet the blast of Eurus fear,
Stand at the door of life, and doubt to clothe the year;
Till gentle heat, and soft repeated rains,
Make the green blood to dance within their veins:
Then, at their call, embolden'd out they come,
And swell the gems, and burst the narrow room;
Broader and broader yet, their blooms display,
Salute the welcome sun, and entertain the day.

Then from their breathing souls the sweets repair
To scent the skies, and purge the' unwholesome air:
Joy spreads the heart, and with a general song
Spring issues out, and leads the jolly months along.

In that sweet season, as in bed I lay,
And sought in sleep to pass the night away,
I turn'd my weary side, but still in vain,
Though full of youthful health, and void of pain:
Cares I had none, to keep me from my rest,
For love had never enter'd in my breast;
I wanted nothing fortune could supply,
Nor did she slumber till that hour deny.
I wonder'd then, but after found it true,
Much joy had dried away the balmy dew:
Seas would be pools, without the brushing air
To curl the waves; and sure some little care
Should weary Nature so, to make her want repair.

When Chanticleer the second watch had sung,
Scorning the scorner sleep, from bed I sprung;
And dressing, by the moon, in loose array,
Pass'd out in open air, preventing day,
And sought a goodly grove, as fancy led my way.
Straight as a line in beauteous order stood,
Of oaks unshorn, a venerable wood;
Fresh was the grass beneath, and every tree
At distance planted in a due degree,
Their branching arms in air with equal space
Stretch'd to their neighbours with a long embrace:
And the new leaves on every bough were seen,
Some ruddy-colour'd, some of lighter green.

The painted birds, companions of the spring,
Hopping from spray to spray, were heard to sing;
Both eyes and ears receiv'd a like delight,
Enchanting music, and a charming sight.
On Philomel I fix'd my whole desire,
And listen'd for the queen of all the quire;
Fain would I hear her heavenly voice to sing,
And wanted yet an omen to the Spring.

Attending long in vain, I took the way,
Which through a path, but scarcely printed, lay;
In narrow mazes oft it seem'd to meet,
And look'd as lightly press'd by fairy-feet.
Wandering I walk'd alone; for still methought
To some strange end so strange a path was wrought.
At last it led me where an arbour stood,
The sacred receptacle of the wood:
This place unmark'd, though oft I walk'd the green,
In all my progress I had never seen:
And seiz'd at once with wonder and delight,
Gaz'd all around me, new to the transporting sight,
'Twas bench'd with turf, and goodly to be seen,
The thick young grass arose in fresher green:
The mound was newly made, no sight could pass
Betwixt the nice partitions of the grass,
The well united sods so closely lay;
And all around the shades defended it from day:
For sycamores with eglantine were spread,
A hedge about the sides, a covering over head.
And so the fragrant brier was wove between,
The sycamore and flowers were mix'd with green,
That nature seem'd to vary the delight,
And satisfied at once the smell and sight.

The master workman of the bower was known
Through fairy lands, and built for Oberon;
Who twining leaves with such proportion drew,
They rose by measure, and by rule they grew:
No mortal tongue can half the beauty tell,
For none but hands divine could work so well.
Both roof and sides were like a parlour made,
A soft recess, and a cool summer shade;
The hedge was set so thick, no foreign eye
The persons plac'd within it could espy:
But all that pass'd without with ease was seen,
As if nor fence nor tree was plac'd between.
'Twas border'd with a field; and some was plain
With grass: and some was sow'd with rising grain;
That (now the dew with spangles deck'd the ground)
A sweeter spot of earth was never found.
I look'd and look'd, and still with new delight;
Such joy my soul, such pleasures fill'd my sight:
And the fresh eglantine exhal'd a breath,
Whose odours were of power to raise from death.
Nor sullen discontent, nor anxious care,
Ev'n though brought thither, could inhabit there:
But thence they fled as from their mortal foe,
For this sweet place could only pleasure know.

Thus as I mus'd, I cast aside my eye
And saw a medlar-tree was planted nigh:
The spreading branches made a goodly show,
And full of opening blooms was every bough.
A goldfinch there I saw with gaudy pride
Of painted plumes, that hopp'd from side to side,
Still pecking as she pass'd; and still she drew
The sweets from every flower, and suck'd the dew.

Suffic'd at length, she warbled in her throat,
And tun'd her voice to many a merry note,
But indistinct, and neither sweet nor clear,
Yet such as sooth'd my soul, and pleas'd my ear.

Her short performance was no sooner tried,
When she I sought, the nightingale, replied.
So sweet, so shrill, so variously she sung,
That the grove echo'd, and the vallies rung:
And I so ravish'd with her heavenly note,
I stood intranc'd, and had no room for thought;
But all o'erpower'd with ecstasy of bliss,
Was in a pleasing dream of paradise.
At length I wak'd; and looking round the bower
Search'd every tree, and pry'd on every flower,
If any where by chance I might espy
The rural poet of the melody:
For still methought she sung not far away;
At last I found her on a laurel spray.
Close by my side she sat, and fair in sight,
Full in a line, against her opposite;
Where stood with eglantine the laurel twin'd;
And both their native sweets were well conjoin'd.

On the green bank I sat, and listen'd long;
(Sitting was more convenient for the song)
Nor till her lay was ended could I move,
But wish'd to dwell for ever in the grove.
Only methought the time too swiftly pass'd,
And every note I fear'd would be the last.
My sight, and smell, and hearing were employ'd,
And all three senses in full gust enjoy'd.

And what alone did all the rest surpass,
The sweet possession of the fairy place;
Single, and conscious to myself alone
Of pleasures to the' excluded world unknown:
Pleasures which no where else were to be found,
And all Elysium in a spot of ground.

Thus while I sat, intent to see and hear,
And drew perfumes of more than vital air,
All suddenly I heard the' approaching sound
Of vocal music, on the' enchanted ground:
An host of saints it seem'd, so full the quire,
As if the bless'd above did all conspire
To join their voices, and neglect the lyre.
At length there issued from the grove behind
A fair assembly of the female kind:
A train less fair, as ancient fathers tell,
Seduc'd the sons of Heaven to rebel.
I pass their form, and every charming grace;
Less than an angel would their worth debase;
But their attire, like liveries of a kind
All rich and rare, is fresh within my mind.
In velvet white as snow the troop was gown'd,
The seams with sparkling emeralds set around:
Their hoods and sleeves the same; and purfled o'er
With diamonds, pearls, and all the shining store
Of eastern pomp: their long descending train
With rubies edg'd and sapphires, swept the plain:
High on their heads, with jewels richly set
Each lady wore a radiant coronet.
Beneath the circles, all the quire was grac'd
With chaplets green on their fair foreheads plac'd,

Of laurel some, of woodbine many more;
And wreaths of *agnus castus* others bore:
These last, who with those virgin-crowns were dress'd,
Appear'd in higher honour than the rest.
They danc'd around, but in the midst was seen
A lady of a more majestic mien;
By stature, and by beauty, mark'd their sovereign queen.

She in the midst began with sober grace;
Her servants' eyes were fix'd upon her face:
And as she mov'd or turn'd, her motions view'd,
Her measures kept, and step by step pursued.
Methought she trod the ground with greater grace,
With more of godhead shining in her face;
And as in beauty she surpass'd the quire,
So nobler than the rest was her attire.
A crown of ruddy gold inclos'd her brow,
Plain without pomp, and rich without a show:
A branch of *agnus castus* in her hand
She bore aloft, her sceptre of command!
Admir'd, ador'd, by all the circling crowd;
For wheresoe'er she turn'd her face, they bow'd:
And as she danc'd, a roundelay she sung,
In honour of the laurel, ever young:
She rais'd her voice on high, and sung so clear,
The fawns came scudding from the groves to hear:
And all the bending forest lent an ear.
At every close she made, the' attending throng
Replied, and bore the burden of the song;

So just, so small, yes in so sweet a note,
It seem'd the music melted in the throat.

Thus dancing on, and singing as they danc'd,
They to the middle of the mead advanc'd,
Till round my arbour a new ring they made,
And footed it about the secret shade.
O'erjoy'd to see the jolly troop so near,
But somewhat aw'd, I shook with holy fear;
Yet not so much, but that I noted well
Who did the most in song or dance excel.

Not long I had observ'd, when from afar
I heard a sudden symphony of war;
The neighing coursers, and the soldiers' cry,
And sounding trumps that seem'd to tear the sky:
I saw soon after this, behind the grove
From whence the ladies did in order move,
Come issuing out in arms a warrior-train,
That like a deluge pour'd upon the plain:
On barbed steeds they rode in proud array,
Thick as the college of the bees in May,
When swarming o'er the dusky fields they fly,
New to the flowers, and intercept the sky.
So fierce they drove, their coursers were so fleet,
That the turf trembled underneath their feet.

To tell their costly furniture were long,
The summer's day would end before the song:
To purchase but the tenth of all their store,
Would make the mighty Persian monarch poor.

Yet what I can, I will; before the rest
The trumpets issued in white mantles dress'd:
A numerous troop, and all their heads around
With chaplets green of cerrial-oak were crown'd;
And at each trumpet was a banner bound;
Which, waving in the wind, display'd at large
Their master's coat of arms, and knightly charge.
Broad were the banners, and of snowy hue,
A purer web the silk-worm never drew.
The chief about their necks the scutcheons wore,
With orient pearls and jewels powder'd o'er:
Broad were their collars too, and every one
Was set about with many a costly stone.
Next these of kings at arms a goodly train,
In proud array, came prancing o'er the plain:
Their cloaks were cloth of silver mix'd with gold,
And garlands green around their temples roll'd.
Rich crowns were on their royal scutcheons plac'd,
With sapphires, diamonds, and with rubies grac'd.
And as the trumpets their appearance made,
So these in habits were alike array'd;
But with a pace more sober, and more slow:
And twenty, rank in rank, they rode a-row.
The pursuivants came next, in number more;
And, like the heralds, each his scutcheon bore:
Clad in white velvet all their troop they led,
With each an oaken chaplet on his head.

Nine royal knights in equal rank succeed,
Each warrior mounted on a fiery steed:
In golden armour glorious to behold;
The rivets of their arms were nail'd with gold

Their surcoats of white ermine-fur were made:
With cloth of gold between, that cast a glittering shade.
The trappings of their steeds were of the same;
The golden fringe ev'n set the ground on flame,
And drew a precious trail: a crown divine
Of laurel, did about their temples twine.

Three henchmen were for every knight assign'd,
All in rich livery clad, and of a kind:
White velvet, but unshorn, for cloaks they wore,
And each within his hand a truncheon bore:
The foremost held a helm of rare device;
A prince's ransom would not pay the price:
The second bore the buckler of his knight;
The third, of cornel-wood, a spear upright,
Headed with piercing steel, and polish'd bright.
Like to their lords, their equipage was seen,
And all their foreheads crown'd with garlands green.

And after these, came arm'd with spear and shield,
A host so great, as cover'd all the field:
And all their foreheads, like the knights before,
With laurels ever green were shaded o'er,
Or oak, or other leaves of lasting kind,
Tenacious of the stem, and firm against the wind.
Some in their hands, beside the lance and shield,
The boughs of woodbine or of hawthorn held,
Or branches for their mystic emblems took
Of palm, of laurel, or of cerrial oak.

Thus marching to the trumpet's lofty sound,
Drawn in two lines adverse they wheel'd around,
And in the middle meadow took their ground.
Among themselves the tourney they divide,
In equal squadrons, rang'd on either side.
Then turn'd their horses' heads, and man to man,
And steed to steed oppos'd, the justs began.
They lightly set their lances in the rest,
And, at the sign, against each other press'd:
They met; I, sitting at my ease, beheld
The mix'd events and fortunes of the field.
Some broke their spears, some tumbled horse and man,
And round the fields the lighten'd coursers ran,
An hour and more; like tides, in equal sway
They rush'd, and won by turns and lost the day.
At length the nine (who still together held)
Their fainting foes to shameful flight compell'd,
And with resistless force o'erran the field.
Thus, to their fame, when finish'd was the fight,
The victors from their lofty steeds alight:
Like them dismounted all the warlike train,
And two by two proceeded o'er the plain:
Till to the fair assembly they advanc'd,
Who, near the secret arbour, sung and danc'd.

The ladies left their measures at the sight,
To meet the chiefs returning from the fight,
And each, with open arms, embrac'd her chosen knight.
Amid the plain a spreading laurel stood,
The grace and ornament of all the wood:

That pleasing shade they sought, a soft retreat
From sudden April showers, a shelter from the heat.
Her leafy arms with such extent were spread,
So near the clouds was her aspiring head,
That hosts of birds that wing the liquid air,
Perch'd in the boughs, had nightly lodging there:
And flocks of sheep beneath the shade from far
Might hear the rattling hail, and wintry war;
From Heaven's inclemency here found retreat,
Enjoy'd the cool, and shun'd the scorching heat:
A hundred knights might there at ease abide;
And every knight a lady by his side:
The trunk itself such odours did bequeath, [breath.
That a Moluccan breeze to these was common
The lords and ladies here approaching, paid
Their homage, with a low obeisance made:
And seem'd to venerate the sacred shade.
These rites perform'd, their pleasures they pursue,
With songs of love, and mix with measures new;
Around the holy tree their dance they frame,
And every champion leads his chosen dame.

I cast my sight upon the further field,
And a fresh object of delight beheld:
For, from the region of the west I heard
New music sound, and a new troop appear'd
Of knights and ladies mix'd, a jolly band;
But all on foot they march'd, and hand in hand.

The ladies dress'd in rich simars were seen
Of Florence satin, flower'd with white and green,
And for a shade betwixt the bloomy gridelin.

The borders of their petticoats below
Were guarded thick with rubies on a row;
And every damsel wore upon her head
Of flowers a garland, blended white and red.
Attir'd in mantles all the knights were seen,
That gratified the view with cheerful green:
Their chaplets of their ladies' colours were,
Compos'd of white and red, to shade their shining hair.
Before the merry troop the minstrels play'd;
All in their master's liveries were array'd,
And clad in green; and on their temples wore
The chaplets white and red their ladies bore.
Their instruments were various in their kind;
Some for the bow, and some for breathing wind:
The psaltery, pipe, and hautboy's noisy band,
And the soft lute trembling beneath the touching hand.
A tuft of daisies on a flowery lay
They saw, and thitherward they bent their way:
To this both knights and dames their homage made,
And due obeisance to the daisy paid.
And then the band of flutes began to play,
To which a lady sung a virelay;
And still at every close she would repeat
The burden of the song, 'The daisy is so sweet.'
'The daisy is so sweet,' when she begun,
The troop of knights and dames continued on.
The concert and the voice so charm'd my ear,
And sooth'd my soul, that it was heaven to hear:

But soon their pleasure pass'd: at noon of day
The sun with sultry beams began to play:
Not Sirius shoots a fiereer flame from high,
When with his poisonous breath he blasts the sky:
Then droop'd the fading flowers (their beauty fled)
And clos'd their sickly eyes, and hung their head;
And, rivell'd up with heat, lay dying in thir bed.
The ladies gasp'd, and seareely could respire;
The breath they drew, no longer air, but fire;
The fainty knights were scoreh'd; and knew not where
To run for shelter, for no shade was near.
And after this the gathering elouds amain,
Pour'd down a storm of rattling hail and rain,
And lightning flash'd betwixt: the field and flow'rs,
Burnt up before, were buried in the show'rs.
The ladies and the knights, no shelter nigh,
Bare to the weather, and the wintry sky,
Were dropping wet, disconsolate and wan,
And through their thin array receiv'd the rain.

While those in white, proteeted by the tree,
Saw pass the vain assault, and stood from danger free.
But as eompassion mov'd their gentle minds,
When ceas'd the storm, and silent were the winds,
Displeas'd at what, not suffering, they had seen,
They went to cheer the faction of the green.
The queen in white array before her band,
Saluting, took her rival by the hand;

So did the knights and dames, with courtly grace,
And with behaviour sweet their foes embrace.
Then thus the queen with laurel on her brow:
'Fair sister, I have suffer'd in your woe,
Nor shall be wanting aught within my pow'r
For your relief in my refreshing bow'r.'
That other answer'd with a lowly look,
And soon the gracious invitation took:
For ill at ease, both she and all her train
The scorching sun had borne, and beating rain;
Like courtesy was us'd by all in white,
Each dame a dame receiv'd, and every knight a knight.
The laurel-champions with their swords invade
The neighbouring forests, where the justs were made,
And sere wood from the rotten hedges took,
And seeds of latent fire from flints provoke:
A cheerful blaze arose, and by the fire
They warm'd their frozen feet, and dried their wet attire.
Refresh'd with heat, the ladies sought around
For virtuous herbs, which gather'd from the ground
They squeez'd the juice, and cooling ointment made,
Which on their sun-burnt cheeks, and their chapt skins they laid:
Then sought green salads which they bade them eat,
A sovereign remedy for inward heat.
The lady of the leaf ordain'd a feast,
And made the lady of the flower her guest:

When lo! a bower aseended on the plain,
With sudden seats adorn'd,and large for either train.
This bower was near my pleasant arbour plae'd,
That I eould hear and see whatever pass'd.
The ladies sate, with eaeh a knight between,
Distinguish'd by their colours, white and green:
The vanquish'd party with the vietors join'd,
Nor wanted sweet discourse—the banquet of the mind.
Meantime, the minstrels play'd on either side,
Vain in their art, and for the mastery vied:
The sweet contention lasted for an hour,
And reaeh'd my secret arbour from the bow'r.
The sun was set; and Vesper, to supply
His absent beam, had lighted up the sky;
When Philomel, offieious all the day
To sing the serviee of the' ensuing May,
Fled from her laurel-shade, and wing'd her flight
Direetly to the queen array'd in white;
And hopping, sate familiar on her hand,
A new musieian, and increas'd the band.

The goldfineh, who, to shun the sealding heat,
Had ehang'd the medlar for a safer seat,
And hid in bushes 'scap'd the bitter show'r,
Now perch'd upon the lady of the flow'r,
And either songster holding out their throats,
And folding up their wings, renew'd their notes;
As if all day, preluding to the fight,
They only had rehears'd, to sing by night.
The banquet ended, and the battle done,
They dane'd by star-light and the friendly moon:

And when they were to part, the laureate queen
Supplied with steeds the lady of the green;
Her and her train conducting on the way,
The moon to follow, and avoid the day.

This when I saw, inquisitive to know
The secret moral of the mystic show,
I started from my shade, in hopes to find
Some nymph to satisfy my longing mind:
And as my fair adventure fell, I found
A lady all in white with laurel crown'd,
Who clos'd the rear, and softly pac'd along,
Repeating to herself the former song.
With due respect my body I inclin'd,
As to some being of superior kind,
And made my court, according to the day,
Wishing her queen and her a happy May!
'Great thanks my daughter!' with a gracious bow,
She said; and I, who much desir'd to know
Of whence she was, yet fearful how to break
My mind, adventur'd humbly thus to speak:
'Madam, might I presume, and not offend?
So may the stars and shining moon attend
Your nightly sports, as you vouchsafe to tell
What nymphs they were who mortal forms excel,
And what the knights who fought in listed fields
so well.'
To this the dame replied, 'Fair daughter, know
That what you saw was all a fairy show:
And all those airy shapes you now behold,
Were human bodies once, and cloth'd with earthly
mould:

Our souls, not yet prepar'd for upper light,
Till doomsday wander in the shades of night:
This only holiday of all the year,
We privileg'd in sunshine may appear;
With songs and dance we celebrate the day,
And with due honours usher in the May.
At other times we reign by night alone,
And, posting through the skies, pursue the moon:
But when the morn arises, none are found,
For cruel Demogorgon walks the round,
And if he finds a fairy lag in light,
He drives the wretch before, and lashes into night.

'All courteous are by kind; and ever proud
With friendly offices to help the good.
In every land we have a larger space
Than what is known to you of mortal race:
Where we with green adorn our fairy bow'rs,
And ev'n this grove, unseen before, is ours.
Know further, every lady cloth'd in white,
And, crown'd with oak and laurel every knight,
Are servants to the Leaf, by liveries known
Of innocence, and I myself am one!
Saw you not her, so graceful to behold,
In white attire, and crown'd with radiant gold?
The sovereign lady of our land is she,
Diana call'd, the queen of chastity:
And, for the spotless name of maid she bears,
That *agnus castus* in her hand appears:
And all her train with leafy chaplets crown'd,
Were for unblam'd virginity renown'd;

But those the chief and highest in command
Who bear those holy branches in their hand.
The knights adorn'd with laurel-crowns are they,
Whom death nor danger ever could dismay;
Victorious names, who made the world obey;
Who while they liv'd in deeds of arms excell'd,
And after death for deities were held.
But those who wear the woodbine on their brow,
Were knights of love, who never broke their vow:
Firm to their plighted faith, and ever free
From fears and fickle chance, and jealousy.
The lords and ladies who the woodbine bear,
As true as Tristram and Isotta were.'

'But what are those,' said I, 'the' unconquer'd nine,
Who, crown'd with laurel-wreaths, in golden armour shine?
And who the knights in green, and what the train
Of ladies dress'd with daisies on the plain?
Why both the bands in worship disagree,
And some adore the flower, and some the tree?'

'Just is your suit, fair daughter,' said the dame,
'Those laurell'd chiefs were men of mighty fame;
Nine worthies were they call'd of different rites,
Three Jews, three pagans, and three Christian knights.

These, as you see, ride foremost in the field,
As they the foremost rank of honour held,
And all in deeds of chivalry excell'd:

Their temples wreath'd with leaves, that still renew;
For deathless laurel is the victor's due,
Who bear the bows were knights in Arthur's reign,
Twelve they, and twelve the peers of Charlemagne:
For bows the strength of brawny arms imply,
Emblems of valour and of victory.
Behold an order yet of newer date,
Doubling their number, equal in their state;
Our England's ornament, the crown's defence,
In battle brave protectors of their prince;
Unchang'd by fortune, to their sovereign true,
For which their manly legs are bound with blue.
These, of the garter call'd, of faith unstain'd,
In fighting fields the laurel have obtain'd,
And well repaid those honours which they gain'd
The laurel-wreaths were first by Cæsar worn,
And still they Cæsar's successors adorn:
One leaf of this is immortality,
And more of worth than all the world can buy.'

'One doubt remains,' said I, 'the dames in green,
What were their qualities, and who their queen?'
'Flora commands,' said she, 'those nymphs and knights,
Who liv'd in slothful ease, and loose delights:
Who never acts of honour durst pursue,
The men inglorious knights, the ladies all untrue:
Who nurs'd in idleness and train'd in courts,
Pass'd all their precious hours in plays and sports,
Till death behind came stalking on unseen,
And wither'd, like the storm, the freshness of their green.

These, and their mates, enjoy the present hour,
And therefore pay their homage to the Flow'r.
But knights in knightly deeds should persevere,
And still continue what at first they were;
Continue and proceed in honour's fair career.
No room for cowardice or dull delay,
From good to better they should urge their way.
For this with golden spurs the chiefs are grac'd,
With pointed rowels arm'd to mend their haste;
For this with lasting leaves their brows are bound;
For laurel is the sign of labour crown'd,
Which bears the bitter blast, nor shaken falls to ground:
From winter winds it suffers no decay,
For ever fresh and fair, and every month is May.
Ev'n when the vital sap retreats below,
Ev'n when the hoary head is hid in snow,
The life is in the leaf; and still between
The fits of falling snows, appears the streaky green.
Not so the flower, which lasts for little space,
A short liv'd good, and an uncertain grace;
This way and that the feeble stem is driv'n,
Weak to sustain the storms and injuries of heav'n.
Prop'd by the spring, it lifts aloft the head,
But of a sickly beauty, soon to shed;
In summer living, and in winter dead.
For things of tender kind, for pleasure made,
Shoot up with swift increase, and sudden are decay'd.'

With humble words, the wisest I could frame,
And proffer'd service, I repaid the dame:
That of her grace, she gave her maid to know
The secret meaning of this moral show.
And she, to prove what profit I had made
Of mystic truth, in fables first convey'd,
Demanded, till the next returning May,
Whether the leaf or flower I would obey?
I chose the leaf: she smil'd with sober cheer,
And wish'd me fair adventure for the year;
And gave me charms and sigils, for defence
Against ill tongues that scandal innocence:
'But I,' said she, 'my fellows must pursue:
Already past the plain and out of view.'

We parted thus; I homeward sped my way,
Bewilder'd in the wood till dawn of day,
And met the merry crew who danc'd about the May.
Then late refresh'd with sleep, I rose to write
The visionary vigils of the night.—
Blush, as thou mayst, my little book, for shame!
Nor hope with homely verse to purchase fame;
For such thy Maker chose; and so design'd
Thy simple style to suit thy lowly kind.

CYMON AND IPHIGENIA.

FROM

BOCCACE.

CYMON AND IPHIGENIA.

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BOCCACE.

POETA LOQUITUR.

Old as I am, for ladies' love unfit,
The power of beauty I remember yet [wit.
Which once inflam'd my soul, and still inspires my
If love be folly, the severe divine*
Has felt that folly, though he censures mine;
Pollutes the pleasures of a chaste embrace,
Acts what I write, and propagates in grace,
With riotous excess a priestly race.
Suppose him free, and that I forge the' offence,
He show'd the way, perverting first my sense:
In malice witty, and with venom fraught,
He makes me speak the things I never thought.
Compute the gains of his ungovern'd zeal;
Ill suits his cloth the praise of railing well!
The world will think that what we loosely write,
Though now arraign'd, he read with some delight;
Because he seems to chew the cud again,
When his broad comment makes the text too plain.

* Jeremy Collier, against whom this exordium is a coarse libel.

And teaches more in one explaining page,
Than all the double meanings of the stage.

What needs he paraphrase on what we mean?
We were at worst but wanton, he's obscene.
I nor my fellows nor myself excuse!
But love's the subject of the comic muse:
Nor can we write without it, nor would you
A tale of only dry instruction view;
Nor love is always of a vicious kind,
But oft to virtuous acts inflames the mind;
Awakes the sleepy vigour of the soul,
And, brushing o'er, adds motion to the pool.
Love, studious how to please, improves our parts
With polish'd manners, and adorns with arts.
Love first invented verse, and form'd the rhyme,
The motion measur'd, harmonis'd the chyme:
To liberal acts enlarg'd the narrow soul'd:
Soften'd the fierce, and made the coward bold:
The world, when waste, he peopled with increase,
And warring nations reconcil'd in peace.
Ormond, the first, and all the fair may find,
In this one legend, to their fame design'd,
When beauty fires the blood, how love exalts the mind.

In that sweet isle, where Venus keeps her court,
And every Grace, and all the Loves, resort;
Where either sex is form'd of softer earth,
And takes the bent of pleasure from their birth;
There liv'd a Cyprian lord, above the rest
Wise, wealthy, with a numerous issue blest:

But as no gift of fortune is sincere,
Was only wanting in a worthy heir.
His eldest born, a goodly youth to view,
Excell'd the rest in shape and outward shew;
Fair, tall, his limbs with due proportion join'd,
But of a heavy, dull, degenerate mind.
His soul belied the features of his face;
Beauty was there, but beauty in disgrace:
A clownish mien, a voice with rustic sound,
And stupid eyes that ever lov'd the ground.
He look'd like nature's error; as the mind
And body were not of a piece design'd, [join'd.
But made for two, and by mistake in one were
The ruling rod, the father's forming care,
Were exercis'd in vain on wit's despair;
The more inform'd, the less he understood,
And deeper sunk, by floundering in the mud.
Now scorn'd of all, and grown the public shame,
The people from Galesus chang'd his name,
And Cymon call'd, which signifies a brute;
So well his name did with his nature suit.

His father, when he found his labour lost,
And care employ'd, that answer'd not the cost,
Chose an ungrateful object to remove,
And loath'd to see what nature made him love;
So to his country-farm the fool confin'd:
Rude work well suited with a rustic mind.
Thus to the wilds the sturdy Cymon went,
A 'squire among the swains, and pleas'd with banishment,
His corn and cattle were his only care,
And his supreme delight a country-fair.

It happen'd on a summer's holiday,
That to the greenwood-shade he took his way;
For Cymon shun'd the church, and us'd not much to pray.
His quarter-staff, which he could ne'er forsake,
Hung half before and half behind his back:
He trudg'd along unknowing what he sought,
And whistled as he went, for want of thought.

By chance conducted, or by thirst constrain'd,
The deep recesses of the grove he gain'd;
Where in a plain, defended by the wood,
Crept through the matted grass a crystal flood,
By which an alabaster fountain stood;
And on the margin of the fount was laid
(Attended by her slaves) a sleeping maid:
Like Dian, and her nymphs, when tir'd with sport,
To rest by cool Eurotas they resort.
The dame herself the goddess well express'd,
Not more distinguish'd by her purple vest,
Than by the charming features of her face,
And ev'n in slumber a superior grace:
Her comely limbs compos'd with decent care,
Her body shaded with a slight simar:
Her bosom to the view was only bare;
Where two beginning paps were scarcely spied,
For yet their places were but signified.
The fanning wind upon her bosom blows;
To meet the fanning wind the bosom rose;
The fanning wind and purling streams continue her repose.

The fool of nature stood with stupid eyes
And gaping mouth, that testified surprise,
Fix'd on her face, nor could remove his sight;
New as he was to love, and novice in delight:
Long mute he stood, and leaning on his staff,
His wonder witness'd with an idiot laugh;
Then would have spoke, but by his glimmering sense
First found his want of words, and fear'd offence;
Doubted for what he was he should be known,
By his clown accent, and his country tone.

Through the rude chaos, thus the running light
Shot the first ray that pierc'd the native night:
Then day and darkness in the mass were mix'd,
Till gather'd in a globe, the beams were fix'd:
Last shone the sun, who radiant in his sphere,
Illumin'd heaven and earth, and roll'd around the year.
So reason in this brutal soul began:
Love made him first suspect he was a man;
Love made him doubt his broad barbarian sound;
By love his want of words and wit he found:
That sense of want prepar'd the future way
To knowledge, and disclos'd the promise of a day.

What not his father's care, nor tutor's art,
Could plant with pains in his unpolish'd heart,
The best instructor, Love, at once inspir'd;
As barren grounds to fruitfulness are fir'd:
Love taught him shame, and shame with love at strife,
Soon taught the sweet civilities of life.

His gross material soul at once could find
Somewhat in her excelling all her kind:
Exciting a desire till then unknown,
Somewhat unfound, or found in her alone.
This made the first impression in his mind,
Above, but just above, the brutal kind:
For beasts can like, but not distinguish too,
Nor their own liking by reflection know;
Nor why they like, or this, or t' other face,
Or judge of this or that peculiar grace,
But love in gross, and stupidly admire;
As flies, allur'd by light, approach the fire.
Thus our man-beast, advancing by degrees,
First likes the whole, then separates what he sees;
On several parts a several praise bestows,
The ruby lips, the well-proportion'd nose,
The snowy skin, and raven-glossy hair,
The dimpled cheek, the forehead rising fair,
And ev'n in sleep itself a smiling air.
From thence his eyes descending view'd the rest,
Her plump round arms, white hands, and heaving breast:
Long on the last he dwelt, though every part
A pointed arrow sped to pierce his heart.

Thus in a trice a judge of beauty grown,
(A judge erected from a country clown)
He long'd to see her eyes, in slumber hid,
And wish'd his own to pierce within the lid:
He would have wak'd her, but restrain'd his thought;
And Love, new-born, the first good manners taught.

An awful fear his ardent wish withstood,
Nor durst disturb the goddess of the wood;
For such she seem'd by her celestial face,
Excelling all the rest of human race:
And things divine, by common sense he knew,
Must be devoutly seen at distant view.
So checking his desire, with trembling heart
Gazing he stood, nor would nor could depart;
Fix'd as a pilgrim wilder'd in his way,
Who dares not stir by night for fear to stray,
But stands with awful eyes to watch the dawn of day.

At length awaking, Iphigene the fair
(So was the beauty call'd who caus'd his care)
Unclos'd her eyes, and double day reveal'd,
While those of all her slaves in sleep are seal'd.

The slavering cudden, propp'd upon his staff,
Stood ready gaping with a grinning laugh,
To welcome her awake, nor durst begin
To speak, but wisely kept the fool within.
Then she:—'What make you, Cymon, here alone?
(For Cymon's name was round the country known,
Because descended of a noble race,
And for a soul ill sorted with his face.)

But still the sot stood silent with surprise,
With fix'd regard on her new-open'd eyes,
And in his breast receiv'd the' invenom'd dart,
A tickling pain that pleas'd amid the smart.
But conscious of her form, with quick distrust
She saw his sparkling eyes, and fear'd his brutal lust:

This to prevent, she wak'd her sleepy crew,
And rising hasty took a short adieu!

Then Cymon first his rustic voice essay'd,
With proffer'd service to the parting maid
To see her safe: his hand she long denied,
But took at length, asham'd of such a guide.
So Cymon led her home, and leaving there,
No more would to his country clowns repair,
But sought his father's house with better mind,
Refusing in the farm to be confin'd.

The father wonder'd at the son's return,
And knew not whether to rejoice or mourn;
But doubtfully receiv'd, expecting still
To learn the secret causes of his alter'd will.
Nor was he long delay'd: the first request
He made, was like his brothers to be dress'd,
And, as his birth requir'd, above the rest.

With ease his suit was granted by his sire,
Distinguishing his heir by rich attire.
His body thus adorn'd, he next design'd
With liberal arts to cultivate his mind:
He sought a tutor of his own accord,
And studied lessons he before abhor'd.

Thus the man-child advanc'd, and learn'd so fast,
That in short time his equals he surpass'd:
His brutal manners from his breast exil'd,
His mien he fashion'd, and his tongue he fil'd;

In every exercise of all admir'd,
He seem'd, nor only seem'd, but was inspir'd:
Inspir'd by love, whose business is to please;
He rode, he fenc'd, he mov'd with graceful ease,
More fam'd for sense, for courtly carriage more,
Than for his brutal folly known before.
What then of alter'd Cymon shall we say,
But that the fire which chok'd in ashes lay,
A load too heavy for his soul to move, [love?
Was upward blown below, and brush'd away by
Love made an active progress through his mind,
The dusky parts he clear'd, the gross refin'd,
The drowsy wak'd; and as he went, impress'd
The Maker's image on the human beast.
Thus was the man amended by desire,
And though he lov'd perhaps with too much fire,
His father all his faults with reason scan'd,
And lik'd an error of the better hand;
Excus'd the' excess of passion in his mind,
By flames too fierce, perhaps too much refin'd.
So Cymon, since his sire indulg'd his will,
Impetuous lov'd, and would be Cymon still;
Galesus he disown'd, and chose to bear
The name of fool confirm'd, and bishop'd by the fair.

To Cipseus by his friends his suit he mov'd;
Cipseus, the father of the fair he lov'd:
But he was pre-engag'd by former ties,
While Cymon was endeavouring to be wise:
And Iphigene, oblig'd by former vows,
Had given her faith to wed a foreign spouse.
Her sire and she to Rhodian Pasimond,
Though both repenting, were by promise bound,

Nor could retract; and thus, as fate decreed,
Though better lov'd, he spoke too late to speed.

The doom was past, the ship already sent
Did all his tardy diligence prevent:
Sigh'd to herself the fair unhappy maid,
While stormy Cymon thus in secret said:
'The time is come for Iphigene to find
The miracle she wrought upon my mind:
Her charms have made me man, her ravish'd love
In rank shall place me with the bless'd above;
For mine by love, by force she shall be mine,
Or death, if force should fail, shall finish my design!'

Resolv'd he said; and rigg'd with speedy care
A vessel strong, and well equipp'd for war;
The secret ship with chosen friends he stor'd;
And bent to die or conquer, went aboard.
Ambush'd he lay behind the Cyprian shore,
Waiting the sail that all his wishes bore;
Nor long expected, for the following tide
Sent out the hostile ship and beauteous bride.

To Rhodes the rival bark directly steer'd,
When Cymon sudden at her back appear'd,
And stopp'd her flight: then, standing on his prow,
In haughty terms he thus defied the foe:—
'Or strike your sails at summons, or prepare
To prove the last extremities of war!'
Thus warn'd, the Rhodians for the fight provide;
Already were the vessels side by side,
These obstinate to save, and those to seize the bride.

But Cymon soon his crooked grapples cast,
Which with tenacious hold his foes embrac'd,
And, arm'd with sword and shield, amid the press he pass'd.
Fierce was the fight, but hastening to his prey,
By force the furious lover freed his way:
Himself alone dispers'd the Rhodian crew,
The weak disdain'd, the valiant overthrew;
Cheap conquest for his following friends remain'd,
He reap'd the field, and they but only glean'd.

His victory confess'd, the foes retreat,
And cast their weapons at the victor's feet;
Whom thus he cheer'd: 'O Rhodian youth! I fought
For love alone, nor other booty sought;
Your lives are safe; your vessel I resign,
Yours be your own, restoring what is mine.
In Iphigene I claim my rightful due,
Robb'd by my rival, and detain'd by you:
Your Pasimond a lawless bargain drove,
The parent could not sell the daughter's love;
Or if he could, my love disdains the laws,
And, like a king, by conquest gains his cause:
Where arms take place, all other pleas are vain,
Love taught me force, and force shall love maintain.
You, what by strength you could not keep, release;
And at an easy ransom buy your peace.'

Fear, on the conquer'd side, soon sign'd the accord;
And Iphigene to Cymon was restor'd:
While to his arms the blushing bride he took,
To seeming sadness she compos'd her look,

As if by force subjected to his will;
Though pleas'd, dissembling, and a woman still.
And (for she wept) he wip'd her falling tears,
And pray'd her to dismiss her empty fears;
'For your's I am,' he said, 'and have deserv'd
Your love much better, whom so long I serv'd,
Than he to whom your formal father tied
Your vows; and sold a slave, not sent a bride.'
Thus, while he spoke, he seiz'd the willing prey;
As Paris bore the Spartan spouse away.
Faintly she scream'd, and ev'n her eyes confess'd
She rather would be thought, than was, distress'd.

Who now exults but Cymon in his mind;
Vain hopes, and empty joys of human kind,
Proud of the present, to the future blind!
Secure of fate while Cymon ploughs the sea,
And steers to Candy with his conquer'd prey,
Scarce the third glass of measur'd hours was run,
When like a fiery meteor sunk the sun,
The promise of a storm; the shifting gales
Forsake by fits and fill the flagging sails:
Hoarse murmurs of the main from far were heard,
And night came on, not by degrees prepar'd,
But all at once; at once the winds arise,
The thunders roll, the forky lightning flies.
In vain the master issues out commands,
In vain the trembling sailors ply their hands:
The tempest unforeseen prevents their care,
And from the first they labour in despair.
The giddy ship, betwixt the winds and tides
Forc'd back and forwards, in the circle rides.

Stun'd with the different blows; then shoots amain;
Till counterbuff'd she stops, and sleeps again.
Not more aghast the proud archangel fell,
Plung'd from the height of Heaven to deepest hell,
Than stood the lover of his love possess'd,
Now curs'd the more, the more he had been bless'd;
More anxious for her danger than his own,
Death he defies, but would be lost alone.

Sad Iphigene to womanish complaints
Adds pious prayers, and wearies all the saints.
Ev'n, if she could, her love she would repent;
But since she cannot, dreads the punishment:
Her forfeit faith, and Pasimond betray'd,
Are ever present, and her crime upbraid.
She blames herself, nor blames her lover less,
Augments her anger as her fears increase;
From her own back the burden would remove,
And lays the load on his ungovern'd love,
Which interposing durst, in Heaven's despite,
Invade and violate another's right:
The powers incens'd, awhile defer'd his pain,
And made him master of his vows in vain:
But soon they punish'd his presumptuous pride;
That for his daring enterprise she died,
Who rather not resisted than complied.

Then impotent of mind, with alter'd sense,
She hug'd the' offender, and forgave the' offence;
Sex to the last: meantime with sails declin'd
The wandering vessel drove before the wind:

Toss'd and retoss'd, aloft and then alow,
Nor port they seek, nor certain course they know;
But every moment wait the coming blow.
Thus blindly driven, by breaking day they view'd
The land before 'em, and their fears renew'd;
The land was welcome, but the tempest bore
The threaten'd ship against a rocky shore.
A winding bay was near; to this they bent,
And just escap'd; their force already spent:
Secure from storms, and panting from the sea,
The land unknown at leisure they survey;
And saw (but soon their sickly sight withdrew)
The rising towers of Rhodes at distant view;
And curs'd the hostile shore of Pasimond,
Sav'd from the seas, and shipwreck'd on the ground.

The frighted sailors tried their strength in vain
To turn the stern, and tempt the stormy main;
But the stiff wind withstood the labouring oar,
And forc'd them forward on the fatal shore:
The crooked keel now bites the Rhodian strand,
And the ship moor'd constrains the crew to land.
Yet still they might be safe because unknown;
But, as ill fortune seldom comes alone,
The vessel they dismiss'd was driven before,
Already shelter'd on their native shore:
Known each, they know; but each with change of cheer;
The vanquish'd side exults; the victors fear
Not them but theirs, made prisoners ere they fight,
Despairing conquest, and depriv'd of flight.

The country rings around with loud alarms,
And raw in fields the rude militia swarms;
Mouths without hands; maintain'd at vast expense,
In peace a charge, in war a weak defence:
Stout once a month they march, a blustering band,
And ever, but in times of need, at hand.
This was the morn when issuing on the guard,
Drawn up in rank and file they stood prepar'd
Of seeming arms to make a short essay,
Then hasten to be drunk, the business of the day.

The cowards would have fled, but that they knew
Themselves so many and their foes so few:
But crowding on, the last the first impel;
Till overborne with weight the Cyprians fell.
Cymon inslav'd, who first the war begun,
And Iphigene once more is lost and won.

Deep in a dungeon was the captive cast,
Depriv'd of day, and held in fetters fast;
His life was only spar'd at their request,
Whom taken he so nobly had releas'd:
But Iphigenia was the ladies' care;
Each in their turn address'd to treat the fair;
While Pasimond and his the nuptial feast prepare.

Her secret soul to Cymon was inclin'd.
But she must suffer what her fates assign'd;
So passive is the church of womankind!
What worse to Cymon could his fortune deal,
Roll'd to the lowest spoke of all her wheel?

It rested to dismiss the downward weight,
Or raise him upward to his former height;
The latter pleas'd; and love (concern'd the most)
Prepar'd the' amends for what by love he lost.

The sire of Pasimond had left a son,
Though younger, yet for courage early known,
Ormisda call'd; to whom by promise tied,
A Rhodian beauty was the destin'd bride:
Cassandra was her name; above the rest
Renown'd for birth, with fortune amply bless'd.
Lysimachus who rul'd the Rhodian state,
Was then by choice their annual magistrate:
He lov'd Cassandra too with equal fire,
But fortune had not favour'd his desire;
Cross'd by her friends, by her not disapprov'd,
Nor yet prefer'd, or like Ormisda lov'd;
So stood the' affair: some little hope remain'd,
That should his rival chance to lose, he gain'd.
Meantime young Pasimond his marriage press'd,
Ordain'd the nuptial day, prepar'd the feast;
And frugally resolv'd (the charge to shun,
Which would be double should he wed alone)
To join his brother's bridal with his own.

Lysimachus oppress'd with mortal grief
Receiv'd the news, and studied quick relief.
The fatal day approach'd: if force were us'd,
The magistrate his public trust abus'd;
To justice liable, as law requir'd;
For when his office ceas'd, his power expir'd:

While power remain'd, the means were in his hand
By force to seize, and then forsake the land.
Betwixt extremes he knew not how to move,
A slave to fame, but more a slave to love:
Restraining others, yet himself not free,
Made impotent by power, debas'd by dignity.
Both sides he weigh'd: but after much debate,
The man prevail'd above the magistrate.

Love never fails to master what he finds,
But works a different way in different minds,
The fool enlightens, and the wise he blinds.
This youth proposing to possess and 'scape,
Began in murder, to conclude in rape.
Unprais'd by me, though Heaven sometimes may bless
An impious act with undeserv'd success:
The great, it seems, are privileg'd alone
To punish all injustice but their own.
But here I stop, not daring to proceed;
Yet blush to flatter an unrighteous deed:
For crimes are but permitted, not decreed.

Resolv'd on force, his wit the prætor bent,
To find the means that might secure the' event;
Not long he labour'd, for his lucky thought
In captive Cymon found the friend he sought;
The' example pleas'd: the cause and crime the same;
An injur'd lover, and a ravish'd dame.
How much he durst he knew by what he dar'd;
The less he had to lose, the less he car'd
To manage loathsome life, when love was the reward.

This ponder'd well, and fix'd on his intent,
In depth of night he for the prisoner sent;
In secret sent, the public view to shun,
Then with a sober smile he thus begun:
'The powers above, who bounteously bestow
Their gifts and graces on mankind below,
Yet prove our merit first; nor blindly give
To such as are not worthy to receive:
For valour and for virtue they provide
Their due reward, but first they must be tried.
These fruitful seeds within your mind they sow'd
'Twas your's to improve the talent they bestow'd;
They gave you to be born of noble kind,
They gave you love to lighten up your mind,
And purge the grosser parts: they gave you care
To please, and courage to deserve the fair.

'Thus far they tried you, and by proof they found
The grain intrusted in a grateful ground:
But still the great experiment remain'd,
They suffer'd you to lose the prize you gain'd;
That you might learn the gift was their's alone:
And when restor'd to them the blessing own.
Restor'd it soon will be; the means prepar'd,
The difficulty smooth'd, the danger shar'd:
Be but yourself, the care to me resign,
Then Iphigene is your's, Cassandra mine.
Your rival Pasimond pursues your life,
Impatient to revenge his ravish'd wife,
But yet not his; to-morrow is behind,
And Love our fortunes in one band has join'd.

Two brothers are our foes; Ormisda mine,
As much declar'd as Pasimond is thine:
To-morrow must their common vows be tied;
With love to friend and fortune for our guide,
Let both resolve to die, or each redeem a bride.

'Right I have none, nor hast thou much to plead;
'Tis force, when done, must justify the deed:
Our task perform'd, we next prepare for flight;
And let the losers talk in vain of right:
We with the fair will sail before the wind,
If they are griev'd, I leave the laws behind.
Speak thy resolves; if now thy courage droop,
Despair in prison, and abandon hope;
But if thou dar'st in arms thy love regain,
(For liberty without thy love were vain)
Then second my design to seize the prey; [way.'
Or lead to second rape, for well thou know'st the

Said Cymon, overjoy'd, 'Do thou propose
The means to fight, and only show the foes;
For from the first, when love had fir'd my mind,
Resolv'd I left the care of life behind.'

To this the bold Lysimachus replied,
'Let heaven be neuter, and the sword decide:
The spousals are prepar'd, already play
The minstrels, and provoke the tardy day:
By this the brides are wak'd, their grooms are dress'd;
All Rhodes is summon'd to the nuptial feast,
All but myself the sole unbidden guest.

Unbidden though I am, I will be there,
And, join'd by thee, intend to joy the fair.

'Now hear the rest; when day resigns the light,
And cheerful torches gild the jolly night,
Be ready at my call; my chosen few
With arms administer'd shall aid thy crew.
Then entering unexpected will we seize
Our destin'd prey, from men dissolv'd in ease,
By wine disabled, unprepar'd for fight;
And hastening to the seas suborn our flight:
The seas are ours, for I command the fort,
A ship well mann'd expects us in the port;
If they or if their friends the prize contest,
Death shall attend the man who dares resist.'

It pleas'd; the prisoner to his hold retir'd,
His troop with equal emulation fir'd,
All fix'd to fight, and all their wonted work required.

The sun arose; the streets were throng'd around,
The palace open'd, and the posts were crown'd:
The double bridegroom at the door attends
The' expected spouse, and entertains the friends.
They meet, they lead to church; the priests invoke
The Powers, and feed the flames with fragrant smoke.
This done, they feast; and at the close of night
By kindled torches vary their delight,
These lead the lively dance, and those the brimming bowls invite.

Now at the' appointed place and hour assign'd,
With souls resolv'd, the ravishers were join'd.
Three bands are form'd: the first is sent before,
To favour the retreat, and guard the shore:
The second at the palace-gate is plac'd,
And up the lofty stairs ascend the last:
A peaceful troop they seem with shining vests,
But coats of mail, beneath, secure their breasts.
Dauntless they enter, Cymon at their head,
And find the feast renew'd, the table spread:
Sweet voices, mix'd with instrumental sounds,
Ascend the vaulted roof, the vaulted roof rebounds:
When like the harpies rushing through the hall
The sudden troop appears, the tables fall,
Their smoking load is on the pavement thrown;
Each ravisher prepares to seize his own:
The brides, invaded with a rude embrace,
Shriek out for aid, confusion fills the place:
Quick to redeem the prey their plighted lords
Advance, the palace gleams with shining swords.

But late is all defence, and succour vain;
The rape is made, the ravishers remain:
Two sturdy slaves were only sent before,
To bear the purchas'd prize in safety to the shore.
The troop retires, the lovers close the rear,
With forward faces not confessing fear:
Backward they move, but scorn their pace to mend;
Then seek the stairs, and with slow haste descend.

Fierce Pasimond, their passage to prevent,
Thrust full on Cymon's back in his descent;
The blade return'd, unbath'd, and to the handle bent:
Stout Cymon soon remounts, and cleft in two
His rival's head with one descending blow:
And as the next in rank Ormisda stood,
He turn'd the point: the sword, inur'd to blood,
Bor'd his unguarded breast, which pour'd a purple flood.

With vow'd revenge, the gathering crowd pursues,
The ravishers turn head, the fight renews;
The hall is heap'd with corps; the sprinkled gore
Besmears the walls, and floats the marble floor.
Dispers'd at length, the drunken squadron flies,
The victors to their vessels bear the prize,
And hear, behind, loud groans and lamentable cries.

The crew with merry shouts their anchors weigh,
Then ply their oars, and brush the buxom sea;
While troops of gather'd Rhodians crowd the key.
What should the people do, when left alone?
The governor and government are gone;
The public wealth to foreign parts convey'd;
Some troops disbanded, and the rest unpaid.
Rhodes is the sovereign of the sea no more;
Their ships unrig'd, and spent their naval store;
They neither could defend, nor can pursue,
But grin'd their teeth, and cast a helpless view;

In vain with darts a distant war they try,
Short and more short the missive weapons fly.
Meanwhile the ravishers their crimes enjoy,
And flying sails and sweeping oars employ;
The cliffs of Rhodes in little space are lost,
Jove's isle they seek; nor Jove denies his coast.

In safety landed on the Candian shore,
With generous wines their spirits they restore;
There Cymon with his Rhodian friend resides,
Both court and wed, at once, the willing brides.
A war ensues, the Cretans own their cause,
Stiff to defend their hospitable laws:
Both parties lose by turns, and neither wins,
Till peace propounded by a truce begins.
The kindred of the slain forgive the deed,
But a short exile must for show precede;
The term expir'd, from Candia they remove;
And happy each, at home, enjoys his love.

THE WIFE OF BATH:

HER TALE.

FROM CHAUCER.

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In days of old, when Arthur fill'd the throne,
Whose acts and fame to foreign lands were blown;
The king of elves and little fairy-queen
Gamboll'd on heaths, and danc'd on every green;
And where the jolly troop had led the round,
The grass unbidden rose, and mark'd the ground:
Nor darkling did they dance, the silver light
Of Phœbe serv'd to guide their steps aright,
And, with their tripping pleas'd, prolong'd the night.
Her beams they follow'd, where at full she play'd,
Nor longer than she shed her horns they staid;
From thence with airy flight to foreign lands convey'd.
Above the rest our Britain held they dear;
More solemnly they kept their sabbaths here,
And made more spacious rings, and revell'd half the year.

I speak of ancient times; for now the swain
Returning late may pass the woods in vain,
And never hope to see the nightly train:
In vain the dairy now with mints is dress'd,
The dairy-maid expects no fairy guest
To skim the bowls, and after pay the feast.

She sighs and shakes her empty shoes in vain,
No silver penny to reward her pain:
For priests with prayers, and other godly geer,
Have made the merry goblins disappear;
And where they play'd their merry pranks before
Have sprinkled holy water on the floor:
And friars that through the wealthy regions run
Thick as the motes that twinkle in the sun;
Resort to farmers rich, and bless their halls,
And exorcise the beds, and cross the walls.
This makes the fairy-quires forsake the place,
When once 'tis hallow'd with the rites of grace:
But in the walks where wicked elves have been,
The learning of the parish now is seen,
The midnight parson posting o'er the green,
With gown tuck'd up to wakes; for Sunday next,
With humming ale encouraging his text;
Nor wants the holy leer to country girl betwixt.
From fiends and imps he sets the village free,
There haunts not any incubus but he.
The maids and women need no danger fear
To walk by night, and sanctity so near:
For by some haycock, or some shady thorn,
He bids his beads both even-song and morn.

It so befel in this King Arthur's reign,
A lusty knight was pricking o'er the plain;
A bachelor he was, and of the courtly train.
It happen'd as he rode, a damsel gay
In russet robes to market took her way;
Soon on the girl he cast an amorous eye,
So strait she walk'd, and on her pasterns high:

If seeing her behind he lik'd her pace,
Now turning short he better lik'd her face:
He lights in haste, and full of youthful fire,
By force accomplish'd his obscene desire.
This done, away he rode, not unespied,
For swarming at his back the country cried;
And once in view they never lost the sight,
But seiz'd, and pinion'd brought to court the knight.

Then courts of kings were held in high renown,
Ere made the common brothels of the town;
There, virgins honourable vows receiv'd,
But chaste as maids in monasteries liv'd.
The king himself, to nuptial ties a slave,
No bad example to his poets gave:
And they, not bad, but in a vicious age,
Had not, to please the prince, debauch'd the stage.

Now what should Arthur do? he lov'd the knight;
But sovereign monarchs are the source of right!
Mov'd by the damsel's tears, and common cry,
He doom'd the brutal ravisher—to die.
But fair Geneura rose in his defence,
And pray'd so hard for mercy from the prince,
That to his queen the king the' offender gave,
And left it in her power to kill or save.
This gracious act the ladies all approve,
Who thought it much a man should die for love;
And with their mistress join'd in close debate,
(Covering their kindness with dissembled hate)
If not to free him, to prolong his fate.
At last agreed, they call'd him by consent
Before the queen and female parliament.

And the fair speaker rising from her chair,
Did thus the judgment of the house declare:

'Sir knight, though I have ask'd thy life, yet still
Thy destiny depends upon my will;
Nor hast thou other surety than the grace
Not due to thee from our offended race.
But as our kind is of a softer mould,
And cannot blood without a sigh behold,
I grant thee life; reserving still the pow'r
To take the forfeit when I see my hour:
Unless thy answer to my next demand
Shall set thee free from our avenging hand.
The question whose solution I require
Is,—"what the sex of women most desire?"
In this dispute thy judges are at strife;
Beware; for on thy wit depends thy life.
Yet, lest surpris'd, unknowing what to say,
Thou damn thyself, we give thee further day:
A year is thine to wander at thy will;
And learn from others, if thou want'st the skill.
But, not to hold our proffer turn'd in scorn,
Good sureties will we have for thy return:
That at the time prefix'd thou shalt obey,
And at thy pledge's peril keep thy day.'

Woe was the knight at this severe command;
But well he knew, 'twas bootless to withstand:
The terms accepted as the fair ordain,
He put in bail for his return again,
And promis'd answer at the day assign'd,
The best, with Heaven's assistance, he could find.

His leave thus taken, on his way he went
With heavy heart, and full of discontent;
Misdoubting much, and fearful of the' event.
'Twas hard the truth of such a point to find,
As was not yet agreed among the kind.
Thus on he went; still anxious more and more,
Ask'd all he met, and knock'd at every door;
Inquir'd of men; but made his chief request
To learn from women what they lov'd the best.
They answer'd each according to her mind
To please herself, not all the female kind.
One was for wealth, another was for place;
Crones, old and ugly, wish'd a better face:
The widow's wish was oftentimes to wed;
The wanton maids were all for sport a-bed.
Some said the sex were pleas'd with handsome lies,
And some gross flattery lov'd without disguise:
'Truth is, (says one) he seldom fails to win
Who flatters well, for that's our darling sin;
But long attendance, and a duteous mind,
Will work ev'n with the wisest of the kind.'
One thought the sex's prime felicity
Was from the bonds of wedlock to be free:
Their pleasures, hours, and actions all their own,
And uncontroll'd to give account to none.
Some wish a husband-fool; but such are curst,
For fools perverse of husbands are the worst:
All women would be counted chaste and wise,
Nor should our spouses see but with our eyes;
For fools will prate, and though they want the wit
To find close faults, yet open blots will hit:

Though better for their ease to hold their tongue,
For woman-kind was never in the wrong.
So noise ensues, and quarrels last for life;
The wife abhors the fool, the fool the wife.
And some men say that great delight have we,
To be for truth extoll'd, and secresy;
And constant in one purpose still to dwell;
And not our husband's counsel to reveal.
But that's a fable, for our sex is frail,
Inventing rather than not tell a tale.
Like leaky sieves no secrets we can hold,
Witness the famous tale that Ovid told.

'Midas the king, as in his book appears,
By Phœbus was endow'd with ass's ears,
Which under his long locks he well conceal'd,
As monarchs' vices must not be reveal'd,
For fear the people have 'em in the wind,
Who long ago were neither dumb nor blind;
Nor apt to think from heaven their title springs,
Since Jove and Mars left off begetting kings.
This Midas knew; and durst communicate
To none but to his wife, his ears of state:
One must be trusted, and he thought her fit,
As passing prudent, and a parlous wit.
To this sagacious confessor he went,
And told her what a gift the gods had sent:
But told it under matrimonial seal,
With strict injunction never to reveal.
The secret heard, she plighted him her troth,
(And sacred sure is every woman's oath)
The royal malady should rest unknown,
Both for her husband's honour and her own;

But ne'ertheless she pin'd with discontent,
The counsel rumbled till it found a vent.
The thing she knew she was oblig'd to hide;
By interest and by oath the wife was tied;
But if she told it not, the woman died.
Loth to betray a husband and a prince,
But she must burst, or blab: and no pretence
Of honour tied her tongue from self-defence.
A marshy ground commodiously was near;
Thither she ran, and held her breath for fear,
Lest if a word she spoke of any thing,
That word might be the secret of the king.
Thus full of counsel to the fen she went,
Grip'd all the way, and longing for a vent.
Arriv'd, by pure necessity compell'd,
On her majestic marrow-bones she kneel'd:
Then to the water's brink she laid her head,
And, as a bittern bumps within a reed,
"To thee alone, (O lake!) she said, I tell,
(And, as thy queen, command thee to conceal)
Beneath his lock the king my husband wears
A goodly royal pair of ass's ears!"—
Now I have eas'd my bosom of the pain,
Till the next longing fit return again."

Thus through a woman was the secret known;
Tell us, and in effect you tell the town.
But to my tale:—The knight in heavy cheer,
Wandering in vain had now consum'd the year;
One day was only left to solve the doubt,
Yet knew no more than when he first set out.
But home he must: and, as the' award had been,
Yield up his body captive to the queen.

In this despairing state he hap'd to ride,
As fortune led him, by a forest side:
Lonely the vale and full of horror stood,
Brown with the shade of a religious wood;
When full before him at the noon of night,
(The moon was up and shot a gleamy light)
He saw a quire of ladies in a round,
That, featly footing, seem'd to skim the ground:
Thus dancing hand in hand, so light they were,
He knew not where they trod, on earth or air.
At speed he drove, and came a sudden guest,
In hope where many women were, at least
Some one by chance might answer his request.
But faster than his horse the ladies flew,
And in a trice were vanish'd out of view.
One only hag remain'd: but fouler far
Than grandame apes in Indian forests are:
Against a wither'd oak she lean'd her weight,
Prop'd on her trusty staff, not half upright,
And drop'd an awkward curt'sy to the knight.
Then said, 'What make you, sir, so late abroad
Without a guide, and this no beaten road?
Or want you aught that here you hope to find,
Or travel for some trouble in your mind?
The last I guess; and, if I read aright,
Those of our sex are bound to serve a knight:
Perhaps good counsel may your grief assuage,
Then tell your pain; for wisdom is in age.'

To this the knight; 'Good mother, would you know
The secret cause and spring of all my woe?
My life must with to-morrow's light expire,
Unless I tell what women most desire:

Now could you help me at this hard essay,
Or for your inborn goodness, or for pay;
Yours is my life, redeem'd by your advice,
Ask what you please, and I will pay the price.'
'Plight me thy faith, (quoth she) that what I ask,
Thy danger over and perform'd the task,
That shalt thou give for hire of thy demand,
Here take thy oath, and seal it on my hand;
I warrant thee, on peril of my life,
Thy word shall please both widow, maid, and wife:
The proudest kerchief of the court shall rest
Well satisfied of what they love the best.'

More words there needed not, to move the knight
To take her offer, and his truth to plight.
With that she spread her mantle on the ground,
And, first inquiring whither he was bound,
Bade him not fear, though long and rough the way,
At court he should arrive ere break of day:
His horse should find the way without a guide,
She said: with fury they began to ride:
He on the midst, the beldam at the side.
The horse what devil drove, I cannot tell,
But only this, they sped their journey well:
And all the way the crone inform'd the knight,
How he should answer the demand aright.

To court they came: the news was quickly spread
Of his returning to redeem his head.
The female senate was assembled soon,
With all the mob of women in the town:
The queen sat lord-chief-justice of the hall,
And bade the crier cite the criminal.

The knight appear'd, and silence they proclaim;
Then first the culprit answer'd to his name:
And after forms of law, was last requir'd
To name the thing that women most desir'd.
The' offender, taught his lesson by the way,
And by his counsel order'd what to say,
Thus bold began: 'My lady liege, (said he)
What all your sex desire is Sovereignty!
The wife affects her husband to command;
All must be her's, both money, house, and land.
The maids are mistresses ev'n in their name;
And of their servants full dominion claim.
This, at the peril of my head, I say,
A blunt plain truth,—the sex aspires to sway;
You, to rule all; while we, like slaves, obey.'

There was not one, or widow, maid, or wife,
But said the knight had well deserv'd his life.
Ev'n fair Geneura, with a blush, confess'd
The man had found what women love the best.
Upstarts the beldam, who was there unseen,
And, reverence made, accosted thus the queen:
'My liege, (said she) before the court arise,
May I, poor wretch, find favour in your eyes,
To grant my just request: 'twas I who taught
The knight this answer, and inspir'd his thought.
None but a woman could a man direct
To tell us women, what we most affect.
But first I swore him on his knightly troth,
(And here demand performance of his oath)
To grant the boon that next I should desire;
He gave his faith, and I expect my hire:
My promise is fulfill'd: I sav'd his life,
And claim his debt,—to take me for his wife.'

The knight was ask'd, nor could his oath deny,
But hop'd they would not force him to comply.
The women, who would rather wrest the laws,
Than let a sister-plaintiff lose the cause,
(As judges on the bench more gracious are,
And more attent to brothers of the bar)
Cried, one and all, the suppliant should have right,
And to the grandame-hag, adjudg'd the knight.

In vain he sigh'd, and oft with tears desir'd
Some reasonable suit might be requir'd.
But still the crone was constant to her note,
The more he spoke, the more she stretch'd her throat:
In vain he proffer'd all his goods, to save
His body, destin'd to that living grave.
The liquorish hag rejects the pelf with scorn,
And nothing but the man would serve her turn.
'Nor all the wealth of eastern kings, (said she)
Have power to part my plighted love and me:
And, old and ugly as I am, and poor,
Yet never will I break the faith I swore;
For mine thou art by promise during life,
And I, thy loving and obedient wife.'

'My love! nay, rather my damnation thou;
(Said he) nor am I bound to keep my vow:
The fiend, thy sire, has sent thee from below,
Else how could'st thou my secret sorrows know?
Avaunt, old witch! for I renounce thy bed:
The queen may take the forfeit of my head,
Ere any of my race so foul a crone shall wed!'
Both heard; the judge pronounc'd against the knight;
So was he married in his own despite;

And all day after hid him as an owl,
Not able to sustain a sight so foul.
Perhaps the reader thinks I do him wrong,
To pass the marriage-feast, and nuptial song:
Mirth there was none, the man was *a-la-mort*,
And little courage had to make his court.
To bed they went, the bridegroom and the bride:
Was never such an ill-pair'd couple tied.
Restless he toss'd and tumbled to and fro,
And roll'd, and wriggled further off, for woe.
The good old wife lay smiling by his side,
And caught him in her quivering arms, and cried,
'When you my ravish'd predecessor saw,
You were not then become this man of straw;
Had you been such, you might have 'scap'd the law.
Is this the custom of king Arthur's court?
Are all round-table knights of such a sort?
Remember I am she who sav'd your life,
Your loving, lawful, and complying wife;
Not thus you swore in your unhappy hour,
Nor I for this return employ'd my pow'r.
In time of need I was your faithful friend;
Nor did I since, nor ever will, offend.
Believe me, my lov'd lord, 'tis much unkind;
What fury has possess'd your alter'd mind?
Thus on my wedding-night—without pretence—
Come turn this way, or tell me my offence.
If not your wife, let reason's rule persuade,
Name but my fault, amends shall soon be made.'

'Amends! nay, that's impossible (said he);
What change of age or ugliness can be!

Or, could Medea's magic mend thy face,
Thou art descended from so mean a race,
That never knight was match'd with such disgrace.
What wonder, madam, if I move my side,
When, if I turn, I turn to such a bride.'

'And is this all that troubles you so sore!'
'And what the devil cou'dst thou wish me more?'
'Ah, Benedicite! (replied the crone)
Then cause of just complaining have you none.
The remedy to this were soon applied,
Would you be like the bridegroom to the bride.
But, for you say a long-descended race,
And wealth, and dignity, and power, and place,
Make gentlemen; and that your high degree
Is much disparag'd to be match'd with me;
Know this, my lord, nobility of blood
Is but a glittering and fallacious good:
The nobleman is he whose noble mind
Is fill'd with inborn worth, unborrow'd from his kind.
The King of Heaven was in a manger laid;
And took his earth but from an humble maid:
Then what can birth or mortal men bestow,
Since floods no higher than their fountains flow?
We, who for name and empty honour strive,
Our true nobility from him derive.
Your ancestors, who puff your mind with pride,
And vast estates to mighty titles tied,
Did not your honour, but their own advance;
For virtue comes not by inheritance.
If you traliniate from your father's mind,
What are you else but of a bastard kind?

Do as your great progenitors have done,
And by their virtues prove yourself their son.
No father can infuse or wit or grace;
A mother comes across, and mars the race:
A grandsire or a grandame taints the blood,
And seldom three descents continue good.
Were virtue by descent, a noble name
Could never villainize his father's fame:
But, as the first, the last of all the line
Would, like the sun, ev'n in descending, shine.
Take fire, and bear it to the darkest house,
Betwixt King Arthur's court and Caucasus;
If you depart, the flame shall still remain,
And the bright blaze enlighten all the plain:
Nor, till the fuel perish, can decay,
By nature form'd on things combustible to prey.
Such is not man, who mixing better seed
With worse, begets a base degenerate breed:
The bad corrupts the good, and leaves behind
No trace of all the great begetter's mind.
The father sinks within his son, we see,
And often rises in the third degree,
If better luck a better mother give:
Chance gave us being, and by chance we live.
Such as our atoms were, ev'n such are we,
Or call it chance or strong necessity;
Thus, loaded with dead weight, the will is free.
And thus it needs must be: for seed conjoin'd
Lets into nature's work the' imperfect kind:
But fire, the' enlivener of the general frame,
Is one, its operation still the same.
Its principle is in itself: while ours
Works, as confederates war, with mingled pow'rs,

Or man or woman, whichsoever fails;
And oft the vigour of the worse prevails.
Ether with sulphur blended alters hue,
And casts a dusky gleam of Sodom blue.
Thus in a brute their ancient honour ends,
And the fair mermaid in the fish descends:
The line is gone—no longer duke or earl,
But, by himself degraded, turns a churl.
Nobility of blood is but renown
Of thy great fathers by their virtue known,
And a long trail of light to thee descending down.
If in thy smoke it ends, their glories shine;
But infamy and villainage are thine.
Then what I said before is plainly show'd,
The true nobility proceeds from God:
Not left us by inheritance, but giv'n
By bounty of our stars, and grace of heav'n.
Thus from a captive Servius Tullus rose,
Whom for his virtues the first Romans chose:
Fabricius from their walls repell'd the foe,
Whose noble hands had exercis'd the plough.
From hence, my lord and love, I thus conclude,
That though my homely ancestors were rude,
Mean as I am, yet I may have the grace
To make you father of a generous race:
And noble then am I, when I begin,
In virtue cloth'd, to cast the rags of sin.
If poverty be my upbraided crime,
And you believe in heaven, there was a time
When He, the great controller of our fate,
Deign'd to be man, and liv'd in low estate:
Which He who had the world at his dispose,
If poverty were vice, had never chose.

Philosophers have said, and poets sing,
That a glad poverty's an honest thing:
Content is wealth, the riches of the mind,
And happy he who can that treasure find:
But the base miser starves amidst his store,
Broods on his gold, and griping still at more,
Sits sadly pining, and believes he's poor.
The ragged beggar, though he wants relief,
Has not to lose, and sings before the thief.
Want is a bitter and a hateful good,
Because its virtues are not understood:
Yet many things, impossible to thought,
Have been by need to full perfection brought:
The daring of the soul proceeds from thence,
Sharpness of wit, and active diligence:
Prudence at once, and fortitude it gives,
And, if in patience taken, mends our lives:
For ev'n that indigence that brings me low,
Makes me myself, and Him above, to know;
A good which none would challenge, few would choose,
A fair possession, which mankind refuse.

'If we from wealth to poverty descend,
Want gives to know the flatterer from the friend.
If I am old and ugly, well for you,
No lewd adulterer will my love pursue;
Nor jealousy, the bane of married life,
Shall haunt you for a wither'd homely wife:
For age and ugliness, as all agree,
Are the best guards of female chastity.

'Yet since I see your mind is worldly bent,
I'll do my best to further your content:

And therefore of two gifts in my dispose,
Think, ere you speak, I grant you leave to choose;
Would you I should be still deform'd and old,
Nauseous to touch, and loathsome to behold;
On this condition, to remain for life,
A careful, tender, and obedient wife,
In all I can contribute to your ease,
And not in deed, or word, or thought, displease?
Or would you rather have me young and fair,
And take the chance that happens to your share?
Temptations are in beauty and in youth,
And how can you depend upon my truth?
Now weigh the danger with the doubtful bliss,
And thank yourself, if aught should fall amiss.'

Sore sigh'd the knight, who this long sermon heard:
At length, considering all, his heart he cheer'd;
And thus replied: 'My lady and my wife,
To your wise conduct I resign my life;
Choose you for me, for well you understand
The future good and ill on either hand:
But if an humble husband may request,
Provide and order all things for the best;
Yours be the care to profit and to please,
And let your subject servant take his ease.'

'Then thus in peace (quoth she) concludes the strife,
Since I am turn'd the husband, you the wife:
The matrimonial victory is mine,
Which, having fairly gain'd, I will resign.
Forgive, if I have said or done amiss,
And seal the bargain with a friendly kiss:

I promis'd you but one content to share,
But now I will become both good and fair.
No nuptial quarrel shall disturb your ease,
The business of my life shall be to please:
And for my beauty, that, as time shall try,
But draw the curtain first, and cast your eye.'

He look'd, and saw a creature heavenly fair
In bloom of youth, and of a charming air:
With joy he turn'd, and seiz'd her ivory arm,
And, like Pygmalion, found the statue warm.
Small arguments there needed to prevail;
A storm of kisses pour'd as thick as hail.
Thus long in mutual bliss they lay embrac'd,
And their first love continued to the last:
One sunshine was their life, no cloud between,
Nor ever was a kinder couple seen.

And so may all our lives like theirs be led;
Heaven send the maids young husbands, fresh in bed;
May widows wed as often as they can,
And ever for the better change their man.
And some devouring plague pursue their lives,
Who will not well be govern'd by their wives!

THE

CHARACTER

OF

A GOOD PARSON.

IMITATED FROM CHAUCER, AND ENLARGED.

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CHARACTER

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A GOOD PARSON.

IMITATED FROM CHAUCER, AND ENLARGED.

A PARISH priest was of the pilgrim train;
An awful, reverend, and religious man.
His eyes diffus'd a venerable grace,
And charity itself was in his face.
Rich was his soul, though his attire was poor;
(As God had clothed his own ambassador)
For such, on earth, his bless'd Redeemer bore.
Of sixty years he seem'd; and well might last
To sixty more, but that he liv'd too fast;
Refin'd himself to soul, to curb the sense,
And made almost a sin of abstinence.
Yet had his aspect nothing of severe,
But such a face as promis'd him sincere:
Nothing reserv'd or sullen was to see,
But sweet regards, and pleasing sanctity;
Mild was his accent, and his action free.

With eloquence innate his tongue was arm'd,
Though harsh the precept, yet the preacher charm'd.
For, letting down the golden chain from high,
He drew his audience upward to the sky:
And oft with holy hymns he charm'd their ears,
(A music more melodious than the spheres:)
For David left him, when he went to rest,
His lyre; and, after him, he sung the best.
He bore his great commission in his look,
But sweetly temper'd awe, and soften'd all he spoke.
He preach'd the joys of Heaven, and pains of hell,
And warn'd the sinner with becoming zeal;
But on eternal mercy lov'd to dwell.
He taught the gospel rather than the law,
And forc'd himself to drive, but lov'd to draw:
For fear but freezes minds; but love, like heat,
Exhales the soul sublime to seek her native seat.

To threats the stubborn sinner oft is hard:
Wrapt in his crimes, against the storm prepar'd;
But when the milder beams of mercy play,
He melts, and throws his cumbrous cloak away.
Lightning and thunder (heaven's artillery)
As harbingers before the' Almighty fly:
Those but proclaim his style, and disappear;
The stiller sound succeeds, and God is there!

The tithes his parish freely paid, he took,
But never sued, or curs'd with bell and book:
With patience bearing wrong, but offering none,
Since every man is free to lose his own.

The country churls, according to their kind,
(Who grudge their dues, and love to be behind,)
The less he sought his offerings pinch'd the more;
And prais'd a priest contented to be poor.

Yet of his little he had some to spare,
To feed the famish'd, and to clothe the bare;
For mortified he was to that degree,
A poorer than himself he would not see.
'True priests,' he said, 'and preachers of the word,
Were only stewards of their Sovereign Lord;
Nothing was theirs, but all the public store,
Intrusted riches, to relieve the poor;
Who, should they steal, for want of his relief,
He judg'd himself accomplice with the thief.'

Wide was his parish, not contracted close
In streets, but here and there a straggling house;
Yet still he was at hand, without request,
To serve the sick, to succour the distress'd,
Tempting, on foot, alone, without affright,
The dangers of a dark tempestuous night.

All this the good old man perform'd alone,
Nor spar'd his pains; for curate he had none:
Nor durst he trust another with his care;
Nor rode himself to Paul's the public fair,
To chaffer for preferment with his gold,
Where bishoprics and sinecures are sold:
But duly watch'd his flock by night and day,
And from the prowling wolf redeem'd the prey,
And hungry sent the wily fox away.

The proud he tam'd, the penitent he cheer'd,
Nor to rebuke the rich offender fear'd.
His preaching much, but more his practice wrought,
(A living sermon of the truths he taught:)
For this by rules severe his life he squar'd.
That all might see the doctrine which they heard:
'For priests,' he said, 'are patterns for the rest,
(The gold of Heaven, who bear the God impress'd:)
But when the precious coin is kept unclean,
The Sovereign's image is no longer seen.
If they be foul on whom the people trust,
Well may the baser brass contract a rust.

The prelate, for his holy life he priz'd;
The worldly pomp of prelacy despis'd.
His Saviour came not with a gaudy show,
Nor was his kingdom of the world below.
Patience in want, and poverty of mind,
These marks of church and churchmen he design'd,
And living taught, and dying left behind.
The crown he wore was of the pointed thorn;
In purple he was crucified, not born.
They who contend for place and high degree,
Are not his sons, but those of Zebedee.

Not but he knew the signs of earthly pow'r
Might well become saint Peter's successor:
The holy father holds a double reign;
The prince may keep his pomp—the fisher must be plain.

Such was the saint, who shone with every grace,
Reflecting, Moses-like, his Maker's face.
God saw his image lively was express'd,
And his own work, as in creation, bless'd.

The tempter saw him too with envious eye,
And, as on Job, demanded leave to try.
He took the time when Richard was depos'd,
And high and low with happy Harry clos'd.
This prince, though great in arms, the priest with-
stood:
Near though he was, yet not the next of blood,
Had Richard unconstrain'd resign'd the throne;
A king can give no more than is his own,
The title stood entail'd, had Richard had a son.

Conquest, an odious name, was laid aside;
Where all submitted, none the battle tried.
The senseless plea of right by providence,
Was, by a flattering priest, invented since,
And lasts no longer than the present sway,
But justifies the next who comes in play.

The people's right remains; let those who dare,
Dispute their power, when they the judges are.

He join'd not in their choice, because he knew
Worse might, and often did, from change ensue:
Much to himself he thought, but little spoke,
And undepriv'd, his benefice forsook.

Now, through the land, his cure of souls he stretch'd,
And like a primitive apostle preach'd:
Still cheerful, ever constant to his call;
By many follow'd, lov'd by most, admir'd by all.
With what he begg'd, his brethren he reliev'd,
And gave the charities himself receiv'd:
Gave, while he taught and edified the more,
Because he show'd by proof, 'twas easy to be poor.
He went not with the crowd to see a shrine;
But fed us by the way with food divine.

In deference to his virtues, I forbear
To show you what the rest in orders were:
This brilliant is so spotless, and so bright,
He needs no foil, but shines by his own proper light.

EPISTLES.

TO MY FRIEND,

MR. JOHN HODDESDON,

ON HIS DIVINE EPIGRAMS.*

Thou hast inspir'd me with thy soul, and I,
Who ne'er before could ken of poetry,
Am grown so good proficient, I can lend,
A line in commendation of my friend.
Yet 'tis but of the second hand; if aught
There be in this, 'tis from thy fancy brought.
Good thief, who dar'st, Prometheus-like, aspire,
And fill thy poems with celestial fire:
Enliven'd by these sparks divine, their rays
Add a bright lustre to thy crown of bays.
Young eaglet, who thy nest thus soon forsook,
So lofty and divine a course hast took,
As all admire, before the down begin
To peep, as yet, upon thy smoother chin;
And making Heaven thy aim, hast had the grace
To look the Sun of righteousness i' th' face.
What may we hope, if thou go'st on thus fast?
Scriptures at first, enthusiasms at last!

* These were entitled "Sion and Parnassus; or Epigrams on several Texts of the Old and New Testament," and published in 1650; when Dryden was at Trinity-College.

Thou hast commenc'd, betimes, a saint!—go on,
Mingling diviner streams with Helicon,
That they who view what Epigrams here be,
May learn to make like, in just praise of thee.—
Reader, I've done, nor longer will withhold
Thy greedy eyes; looking on this pure gold
Thou'lt know adulterate copper, which, like this,
Will only serve to be a foil to his.

TO MY HONOURED FRIEND,

SIR ROBERT HOWARD.

ON HIS EXCELLENT POEMS. 1660.

As there is music, uninform'd by art,
In those wild notes, which with a merry heart,
The birds in unfrequented shades express,
Who, better taught at home, yet please us less;
So in your verse a native sweetness dwells,
Which shames composure, and its art excels.
Singing no more can your soft numbers grace,
Than paint adds charms unto a beauteous face.
Yet as, when mighty rivers gently creep,
Their even calmness does suppose them deep,
Such is your Muse: no metaphor swell'd high,
With dangerous boldness, lifts her to the sky:
Those mounting fancies, when they fall again,
Show sand and dirt at bottom do remain.
So firm a strength, and yet withal so sweet,
Did never but in Samson's riddle meet.
'Tis strange each line so great a weight should bear,
And yet no sign of toil, no sweat appear.

Either your art hides art, as stoics feign
Then least to feel when most they suffer pain,
And we, dull souls, admire, but cannot see
What hidden springs within the engine be;
Or 'tis some happiness that still pursues
Each act and motion of your graceful Muse.
Or is it Fortune's work, that in your head
The curious net that is for fancies spread
Lets through its meshes every meaner thought,
While rich ideas there are only caught?
Sure, that's not all; this is a piece too fair
To be the child of Chance, and not of Care.
No atoms casually together hurl'd
Could e'er produce so beautiful a world.
Nor dare I such a doctrine here admit,
As would destroy the providence of Wit.
'Tis your strong genius, then, which does not feel
Those weights would make a weaker spirit reel.
To carry weight and run so lightly too,
Is what alone your Pegasus can do.
Great Hercules himself could ne'er do more,
Than not to feel those heavens and gods he bore.
Your easier Odes, which for delight were penn'd,
Yet our instruction make their second end:
We're both enrich'd and pleas'd, like them that woo
At once a beauty and a fortune too.
Of moral knowledge Poësy was queen,
And still she might, had wanton wits not been,
Who, like ill guardians, liv'd themselves at large,
And, not content with that, debauch'd their charge:
Like some brave captain, your successful pen
Restores the exil'd to her crown again;
And gives us hope that, having seen the days
When nothing flourish'd but fanatic bays,

All will at length in this opinion rest,
'A sober prince's government is best.'
This is not all; your art the way has found
To make the' improvement of the richest ground;
That soil which those immortal laurels bore,
That once the sacred Maro's temples wore.
Eliza's griefs are so express'd by you,
They are too eloquent to have been true.
Had she so spoke, Æneas had obey'd
What Dido, rather than what Jove, had said.
If funeral rights can give a ghost repose,
Your Muse so justly has discharged those,
Eliza's shade may now its wandering cease,
And claim a title to the fields of Peace.
But if Æneas be oblig'd, no less
Your kindness great Achilles doth confess;
Who, dress'd by Statius in too bold a look,
Did ill become those virgin robes he took.
To understand how much we owe to you,
We must your numbers, with your author's, view;
Then we shall see his work was lamely rough,
Each figure stiff, as if design'd in buff;
His colours laid so thick on every place,
As only show'd the paint, but hid the face.
But as in perspective we beauties see,
Which in the glass, not in the picture, be;
So here our sight obligingly mistakes
That wealth, which his your bounty only makes:
Thus vulgar dishes are, by cooks disguis'd,
More for their dressing, than their substance, priz'd.
Your curious notes so search into that age,
When all was fable but the Sacred page,
That, since in that dark night we needs must stray,
We are at least misled in pleasant way.

But what we most admire, your verse no less
The prophet than the poet doth confess.
Ere our weak eyes discern'd the doubtful streak
Of light, you saw great Charles's morning break.
So skilful seamen ken the land from far,
Which shows like mists to the dull passenger.
To Charles your muse first pays her duteous love,
As still the ancients did begin from Jove.
With Monk you end, whose name preserv'd shall be,
As Rome recorded Rufus' memory;
Who thought it greater honour to obey
His country's interest, than the world to sway.
But to write worthy things of worthy men,
Is the peculiar talent of your pen:
Yet let me take your mantle up, and I
Will venture in your right, to prophesy:
'This work, by merit first of fame secure,
Is likewise happy in its geniture: [throne,
For since 'tis born when Charles ascends the
It shares, at once, his fortune, and its own.'

TO LORD-CHANCELLOR HYDE.

PRESENTED ON NEW-YEAR'S DAY, 1662.

MY LORD,

While flattering crowds officiously appear,
To give themselves, not you, an happy year;
And by the greatness of their presents prove
How much they hope, but not how well they love;
The Muses, who your early courtship boast,
Though now your flames are with their beauty lost,

Yet watch their time, that if you have forgot
They were your mistresses, the world may not:
Decay'd by time and wars, they only prove
Their former beauty by your former love,
And now present, as ancient ladies do,
That courted long, at length are forc'd to woo:
For still they look on you with such kind eyes,
As those that see the church's sovereign rise,
From their own order chose, in whose high state
They think themselves the second choice of Fate.
When our great Monarch into exile went,
Wit and religion suffer'd banishment:
Thus once, when Troy was wrap'd in fire and smoke,
The helpless gods their burning shrines forsook;
They with the vanquish'd prince and party go,
And leave their temples empty to the foe.
At length the Muses stand, restor'd again
To that great charge which Nature did ordain;
And their lov'd druids seem reviv'd by Fate,
While you dispense the laws and guide the state.
The nation's soul, our monarch, does dispense
Through you to us his vital influence;
You are the channel where those spirits flow,
And work them higher, as to us they go.

In open prospect nothing bounds our eye,
Until the earth seems join'd unto the sky:
So in this hemisphere our utmost view
Is only bounded by our King and you.
Our sight is limited where you are join'd,
And beyond that no farther Heaven can find.
So well your virtues do with his agree,
That, though your orbs of different greatness be,
Yet both are for each other's use dispos'd,
His to inclose, and yours to be inclos'd:

Nor could another in your room have been,
Except an emptiness had come between.
Well may he then to you his cares impart,
And share his burden where he shares his heart.
In you his sleep still wakes; his pleasures find
Their share of business in your labouring mind.
So when the weary Sun his place resigns,
He leaves his light, and by reflection shines.
Justice, that sits and frowns where public laws
Exclude soft mercy from a private cause,
In your tribunal most herself does please;
There only smiles, because she lives at ease;
And, like young David, finds her strength the more,
When disencumber'd from those arms she wore.
Heaven would our royal master should exceed
Most in that virtue, which we most did need;
And his mild father (who too late did find
All mercy vain but what with power was join'd)
His fatal goodness left to fitter times,
Not to increase, but to absolve our crimes:
But when the heir of this vast treasure knew
How large a legacy was left to you,
(Too great for any subject to retain)
He wisely tied it to the crown again:
Yet, passing through your hands, it gathers more,
As streams, through mines, bear tincture of their ore.
While emp'ric politicians use deceit,
Hide what they give, and cure but by a cheat,
You boldly show that skill which they pretend,
And work by means as noble as your end;
Which should you veil, we might unwind the clue,
As men do Nature, till we came to you.
And as the Indies were not found, before
Those rich perfumes which, from the happy shore,

The winds upon their balmy wings convey'd,
Whose guilty sweetness first their world betray'd;
So, by your counsels, we are brought to view
A rich and undiscover'd world in you.
By you our monarch does that fame assure,
Which kings must have, or cannot live secure:
For prosperous princes gain their subjects' heart,
Who love that praise in which themselves have part.
By you he fits those subjects to obey;
As Heaven's eternal Monarch does convey
His power unseen, and man to his designs
By his bright ministers, the stars, inclines.

Our setting sun, from his declining seat,
Shot beams of kindness on you, not of heat:
And, when his love was bounded in a few,
That were unhappy that they might be true,
Made you the favourite of his last sad times,
That is, a sufferer in his subjects' crimes.
Thus those first favours you receiv'd were sent,
Like Heaven's rewards, in earthly punishment.
Yet Fortune, conscious of your destiny,
E'en then took care to lay you softly by;
And wrap'd your fate among her precious things,
Kept fresh to be unfolded with your King's.
Shown all at once you dazzled so our eyes,
As new-born Pallas did the gods surprise,
When, springing forth from Jove's new-closing wound,
She struck the warlike spear into the ground;
Which sprouting leaves did suddenly inclose,
And peaceful olives, shaded as they rose.

How strangely active are the arts of peace,
Whose restless motions less than wars do cease!
Peace is not freed from labour, but from noise;
And war more force, but not more pains, employs.

Such is the mighty swiftness of your mind,
That, like the earth, it leaves our sense behind,
While you so smoothly turn and roll our sphere,
That rapid motion does but rest appear.
For, as in Nature's swiftness, with the throng
Of flying orbs while ours is borne along,
All seems at rest to the deluded eye,
Mov'd by the soul of the same harmony:
So, carried on by your unwearied care,
We rest in peace, and yet in motion share.
Let Envy, then, those crimes within you see,
From which the happy never must be free:
Envy, that does with Misery reside,
The joy and the revenge of ruin'd pride.
Think it not hard if, at so cheap a rate,
You can secure the constancy of Fate,
Whose kindness sent, what does their malice seem,
By lesser ills the greater to redeem.
Nor can we this weak shower a tempest call,
But drops of heat, that in the sunshine fall.
You have already wearied Fortune so,
She cannot farther be your friend or foe;
But sits all breathless, and admires to feel
A fate so weighty, that it stops her wheel.
In all things else above our humble fate,
Your equal mind yet swells not into state;
But, like some mountain in those happy isles,
Where in perpetual spring young Nature smiles,
Your greatness shows; no horror to affright,
But trees for shade, and flowers to court the sight.
Sometimes the hill submits itself awhile
In small descents, which do its height beguile;
And sometimes mounts, but so as billows play,
Whose rise not hinders but makes short our way.

Your brow, which does no fear of thunder know.
Sees rolling tempests vainly beat below;
And, like Olympus' top, the' impression wears
Of love and friendship writ in former years:
Yet, unimpair'd with labours, or with time,
Your age but seems to a new youth to climb.
Thus heavenly bodies do our time beget,
And measure change, but share no part of it:
And still it shall without a weight increase,
Like this New-year, whose motions never cease.
For since the glorious course you have begun
Is led by Charles, as that is by the sun,
It must both weightless and immortal prove,
Because the centre of it is above.

TO MY HONOURED FRIEND,

DR. CHARLETON,

ON HIS LEARNED AND USEFUL WORKS; BUT MORE PARTICULARLY HIS TREATISE OF STONE-HENGE, BY HIM RESTORED TO THE TRUE FOUNDER.

The longest tyranny that ever sway'd,
Was that wherein our ancestors betray'd
Their free-born reason to the Stagyrite,
And made his torch their universal light.
So truth, while only one supplied the state,
Grew scarce and dear, and yet sophisticate.
Still it was bought, (like emp'ric wares or charms,
Hard words) seal'd up with Aristotle's arms.
Columbus was the first that shook his throne,
And found a Temperate in a Torrid zone;

The feverish air, fann'd by a cooling breeze,
The fruitful vales set round with shady trees,
And guiltless men, who danc'd away their time,
Fresh as their groves, and happy as their clime.
Had we still paid that homage to a name,
Which only God and Nature justly claim,
The western seas had been our utmost bound,
Where poets still might dream the sun was drown'd;
And all the stars that shine in southern skies
Had been admir'd by none but savage eyes.

Among the' asserters of free Reason's claim,
Our nation's not the least in worth or fame.
The world to Bacon does not only owe
Its present knowledge, but its future too.
Gilbert* shall live till loadstones cease to draw,
Or British fleets the boundless ocean awe;
And noble Boyle, not less in nature seen
Than his great brother, read in states and men.
The circling streams, once thought but pools of blood,
(Whether life's fuel or the body's food)
From dark oblivion Harvey's† name shall save;
While Ent‡ keeps all the honour that he gave.
Nor are you, learned friend, the least renown'd,
Whose fame, not circumscrib'd with English ground,
Flies, like the nimble journies of the light,
And is, like that, unspent too in its flight.
Whatever truths have been by Art or Chance,
Redeem'd from error or from ignorance,
Thin in their authors, like rich veins of ore,
Your works unite, and still discover more:

* William Gilbert, M. D. ob. Nov. 30, 1603.
† William Harvey, M. D. ob. June 30, 1657.
‡ Sir George Ent, President of the College of Physicians, &c. ob. 1689.

Such is the healing virtue of your pen,
To perfect cures on books as well as men.
Nor is this work the least; you well may give,
To men new vigour, who make stones to live.
Through you the Danes, their short dominion lost,
A longer conquest than the Saxons boast. [found
Stone-Henge, once thought a temple, you have
A throne, where kings, our earthly gods, were crown'd;
Where by their wondering subjects they were seen,
Joy'd with their stature, and their princely mien.
Our Sovereign here above the rest might stand,
And here be chose again to rule the land.
These ruins shelter'd once his sacred head,
When he from Wor'ster's fatal battle fled,
Watch'd by the Genius of this royal place,
And mighty visions of the Danish race:
His refuge, then, was for a temple shown;
But, he restor'd, 'tis now become a throne.

TO THE

LADY CASTLEMAINE,

UPON HER ENCOURAGING HIS FIRST PLAY.

1663.

As seamen, shipwreck'd on some happy shore,
Discover wealth in lands unknown before,
And, what their art had labour'd long in vain,
By their misfortunes happily obtain;
So my much-envied Muse, by storms long tost,
Is thrown upon your hospitable coast,

And finds more favour by her ill success,
Than she could hope for by her happiness.
Once Cato's virtue did the gods oppose,
While they the victor, he the vanquish'd, chose;
But you have done what Cato could not do,
To choose the vanquish'd, and restore him too.
Let others still triumph, and gain their cause
By their deserts, or by the world's applause;
Let Merit crowns, and Justice laurels give,
But let me, happy, by your pity live.
True poet's empty fame and praise despise;
Fame is the trumpet, but your smile the prize.
You sit above, and see vain men below
Contend for what you only can bestow:
But those great actions others do by chance,
Are, like your beauty, your inheritance:
So great a soul, such sweetness join'd in one,
Could only spring from noble Grandison.
You, like the stars, not by reflection bright,
Are born to your own heaven and your own light;
Like them are good, but from a nobler cause,
From your own knowledge, not from Nature's laws.
Your power you never use but for defence,
To guard your own or others' innocence:
Your foes are such as they, not you, have made,
And Virtue may repel, though not invade.
Such courage did the ancient heroes show, [blow;
Who, when they might prevent, would wait the
With such assurance as they meant to say,
We will o'ercome, but scorn the safest way.
What further fear of danger can there be?
Beauty, which captives all things, sets me free.
Posterity will judge by my success,
I had the Grecian poet's happiness,

Who, waving plots, found out a better way;
Some god descended, and preserv'd the play.
When first the triumphs of your sex were sung
By those old poets, Beauty was but young;
And few admir'd the native red and white,
Till poets dress'd them up to charm the sight:
So Beauty took on trust, and did engage
For sums of praises till she came to age.
But this long-growing debt to poetry
You, justly, Madam, have discharg'd to me;
When your applause and favour did infuse
New life to my condemn'd and dying Muse.

TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS

*THE DUCHESS OF YORK,**

ON THE MEMORABLE VICTORY GAINED BY THE DUKE OVER THE HOLLANDERS, JUNE 3, 1665; AND ON HER JOURNEY AFTERWARDS INTO THE NORTH.

MADAM,

When, for our sakes, your hero you resign'd
To swelling seas, and every faithless wind;
When you releas'd his courage, and set free
A valour fatal to the enemy;
You lodg'd your country's cares within your breast,
(The mansion where soft love should only rest)
And, ere our foes abroad were overcome,
The noblest conquest you had gain'd at home.
Ah, what concerns did both your souls divide!
Your honour gave us what your love denied:

* See these verses particularly alluded to in vol. i. p. 46, of Dryden's poems.

And 'twas for him much easier to subdue
Those foes he fought with than to part from you.
That glorious day, which two such navies saw,
As each, unmatch'd, might to the world give law;
Neptune, yet doubtful whom he should obey,
Held to them both the trident of the sea: [cast,
The winds were hush'd, the waves in ranks were
As awfully as when God's people past:
Those yet uncertain on whose sails to blow,
These, where the wealth of nations ought to flow.
Then with the Duke your Highness rul'd the day;
While all the brave did his command obey,
The fair and pious under you did pray.
How powerful are chaste vows! the wind and tide
You brib'd to combat on the English side.
Thus to your much-lov'd lord you did convey
An unknown succour, sent the nearest way.
New vigour to his wearied arms you brought,
(So Moses was upheld while Israel fought)
While, from afar, we heard the cannon play,
Like distant thunder on a shiny day.
For absent friends we were asham'd to fear,
When we consider'd what you ventur'd there:
Ships, men, and arms, our country might restore,
But such a leader could supply no more.
With generous thoughts of conquest he did burn,
Yet fought not more to vanquish than return.
Fortune and Victory he did pursue,
To bring them, as his slaves, to wait on you.
Thus beauty ravish'd the rewards of fame,
And the fair triumph'd when the brave o'ercame.
Then, as you meant to spread another way,
By land, your conquests, far as his by sea;

Leaving our southern clime, you march'd along
The stubborn north ten thousand Cupids strong.
Like commons the nobility resort,
In crowding heaps to fill your moving court:
To welcome your approach the vulgar run,
Like some new envoy from the distant sun;
And country-beauties by their lovers go,
Blessing themselves, and wondering at the show.
So when the new-born phœnix first is seen,
Her feather'd subjects all adore their queen,
And while she makes her progress through the East,
From every grove her numerous train's increas'd;
Each poet of the air her glory sings,
And round her the pleas'd audience clap their wings.

TO MR. LEE,

ON HIS TRAGEDY OF 'ALEXANDER THE GREAT.'

1677.

The blast of common censure could I fear,
Before your play my name should not appear;
For 'twill be thought, and with some colour too,
I pay the bribe I first receiv'd from you;
That mutual vouchers for our fame we stand,
And play the game into each other's hand;
And as cheap pen'worths to ourselves afford,
As Bessus, and the brothers of the sword.
Such libels private men may well endure,
When states and kings themselves are not secure:
For ill men, conscious of their inward guilt,
Think the best actions on by-ends are built.

And yet my silence had not 'scap'd their spite;
Then envy had not suffer'd me to write;
For, since I could not ignorance pretend,
Such merit I must envy or commend.
So many candidates there stand for wit,
A place at court is scarce so hard to get:
In vain they crowd each other at the door;
For e'en reversions are all begg'd before:
Desert, how known soe'er, is long delay'd,
And then, too, fools and knaves are better paid.
Yet, as some actions bear so great a name,
That courts themselves are just for fear of shame,
So has the mighty merit of your play
Extorted praise, and forc'd itself a way.
'Tis here, as 'tis at sea; who farthest goes,
Or dares the most, makes all the rest his foes:
Yet when some virtue much outgrows the rest,
It shoots too fast and high to be express'd;
As his heroic worth struck Envy dumb,
Who took the Dutchman, and who cut the boom.
Such praise is yours, while you the passions move,
That 'tis no longer feign'd, 'tis real love,
Where nature triumphs over wretched Art;
We only warm the head, but you the heart.
Always you warm; and if the rising year,
As in hot regions, brings the sun too near,
'Tis but to make your fragrant spices blow,
Which in our cooler climates will not grow.
They only think you animate your theme
With too much fire, who are themselves all phlegm.
Prizes would be for lags of slowest pace,
Were cripples made the judges of the race.
Despise those drones who praise, while they accuse,
The too much vigour of your youthful Muse.

That humble style which they your virtue make,
Is in your power; you need but stoop and take.
Your beauteous images must be allow'd
By all, but some vile poets of the crowd.
But how should any sign-post dauber know
The worth of Titian, or of Angelo?
Hard features every bungler can command;
To draw true beauty shows a master's hand.

TO THE

EARL OF ROSCOMMON.

ON HIS EXCELLENT ESSAY ON TRANSLATED VERSE.

1680.

Whether the fruitful Nile or Tyrian shore,
The seeds of arts and infant-science bore,
'Tis sure the noble plant, translated first,
Advanc'd its head in Grecian gardens nurst.
The Grecians added verse; their tuneful tongue
Made Nature first, and Nature's God, their song.
Nor stopt translation here: for, conquering Rome
With Grecian spoils, brought Grecian numbers home,
Enrich'd by those Athenian Muses more,
Than all the vanquish'd world could yield before;
Till barbarous nations, and more barbarous times,
Debas'd the majesty of verse to rhymes;
Those rude at first, a kind of hobbling prose,
That limp'd along, and tinkled in the close.
But Italy, reviving from the trance
Of Vandal, Goth, and Monkish ignorance,

With pauses, cadence, and well-vowel'd words,
And all the graces a good ear affords,
Made rhyme an art; and Dante's polish'd page
Restor'd a Silver, not a Golden Age.
Then Petrarch follow'd, and in him we see
What rhyme, improv'd in all its height, can be;
At best a pleasing sound, and fair barbarity.
The French pursued their steps; and Britain, last,
In manly sweetness all the rest surpass'd.
The wit of Greece, the gravity of Rome,
Appear exalted in the British loom:
The Muses' empire is restor'd again,
In Charles's reign, and by Roscommon's pen.
Yet modestly he does his work survey,
And calls a finish'd poem—an Essay:
For all the needful rules are scatter'd here,
Truth smoothly told, and pleasantly severe;
So well is art disguis'd, for nature to appear.
Nor need those rules to give translation light;
His own example is a flame so bright,
That he who but arrives to copy well,
Unguided will advance, unknowing will excel.
Scarce his own Horace could such rules ordain,
Or his own Virgil sing a nobler strain.
How much, in him, may rising Ireland boast;
How much, in gaining him, has Britain lost!
Their island in revenge has ours reclaim'd;
The more instructed we, the more we still are sham'd.
'Tis well for us his generous blood did flow
Deriv'd from British channels long ago,
That here his conquering ancestors were nurst,
And Ireland but translated England first:
By this reprisal we regain our right,
Else must the two contending nations fight;

A nobler quarrel for his native earth,
Than what divided Greece for Homer's birth.
To what perfection will our tongue arrive,
How will invention and translation thrive,
When authors nobly born will bear their part,
And not disdain the' inglorious praise of art!
Great generals thus, descending from command,
With their own toil provoke the soldiers' hand.
How will sweet Ovid's ghost be pleas'd to hear
His fame augmented by an English peer!*
How he embellishes his Helen's loves,
Outdoes his softness, and his sense improves!
When these translate, and teach translators too,
Nor firstling kid, nor any vulgar vow,
Should at Apollo's grateful altar stand:
Roscommon writes; to that auspicious hand,
Muse, feed the bull that spurns the yellow sand.
Roscommon! whom both court and camps commend;
True to his prince, and faithful to his friend:
Roscommon! first in fields of honour known,
First in the peaceful triumphs of the gown,
Who both Minervas justly makes his own.
Now let the few belov'd by Jove, and they
Whom infus'd Titan form'd of better clay,
On equal terms with ancient wit engage,
Nor mighty Homer fear, nor sacred Virgil's page:
Our English palace opens wide in state,
And, without stooping, they may pass the gate.

* The Earl of Mulgrave.

TO

SIR GEORGE ETHEREGE.

To you who live in chill degree,
As map informs, of fifty-three,
And do not much for cold atone,
By bringing thither fifty-one;
Methinks all climes should be alike,
From Tropic e'en to Pole Arctic;
Since you have such a constitution
As no where suffers diminution.
You can be old in grave debate,
And young in love-affairs of state;
And both to wives and husbands show
The vigour of a Plenipo.
Like mighty missioner you come
Ad partes infidelium.
A work of wondrous merit sure,
So far to go, so much to' endure;
And all to preach to German dame,
Where sound of Cupid never came.
Less had you done, had you been sent
As far as Drake or Pinto went,
For cloves or nutmegs to the Line-a,
Or e'en for oranges to China.
That had indeed been charity,
Where love-sick ladies helpless lie,
Chapt, and for want of liquor, dry.
But you have made your zeal appear
Within the circle of the Bear:
What region of the earth's so dull,
That is not of your labours full?

Triptolemus (so sung the Nine)
Strew'd plenty from his cart divine.
But, spite of all these fable-makers,
He never sow'd on Almain acres:
No, that was left, by Fate's decree,
To be perform'd and sung by thee.
Thou break'st through forms with as much ease
As the French King through articles.
In grand affairs thy days are spent,
In waging weighty compliment,
With such as monarchs represent.
They, whom such vast fatigues attend,
Want some soft minutes to unbend,
To show the world that now and then
Great ministers are mortal men.

Then Rhenish rummers walk the round;
In bumpers every king is crown'd;
Besides three holy mitred Hectors,
And the whole college of Electors.
No health of potentate is sunk,
That pays to make his Envoy drunk,
These Dutch delights I mention'd last,
Suit not, I know, your English taste;
For wine to leave a whore, or play,
Was ne'er your Excellency's way.
Nor need this title give offence,
For here you were—your Excellence;
For gaming, writing, speaking, keeping,
His Excellence for all but sleeping.
Now, if you top in form, and treat,
'Tis the sour sauce to the sweet meat;
The fine you pay—for being great.
Nay, here's a harder imposition,
Which is indeed the Court's petition,

That, setting worldly pomp aside,
Which poet has at font denied,
You would be pleas'd, in humble way,
To write a trifle call'd a Play.
This truly is a degradation,
But would oblige the crown and nation,
Next to your wise negociation.
If you pretend, as well you may,
Your high degree, your friends will say,—
'The Duke St. Aignon made a play.'
If Gallic wit convince you scarce,
His Grace of Bucks has made a Farce;
And you, whose comic wit is terse all,
Can hardly fall below Rehearsal.
Then finish what you have began;
But scribble faster if you can:
For yet, no George, to our discerning,
Has writ without a ten year's warning.

TO THE

DUCHESS OF YORK,

ON HER RETURN FROM SCOTLAND IN THE YEAR 1682.

When factious rage to cruel exile drove
The Queen of Beauty and the Court of Love,
The Muses droop'd, with their forsaken arts,
And the sad Cupids broke their useless darts:
Our fruitful plains to wilds and deserts turn'd,
Like Eden's face, when banish'd Man it mourn'd.

Love was no more, when Loyalty was gone,
The great supporter of his awful throne.
Love could no longer after Beauty stay,
But wander'd northward to the verge of day,
As if the Sun and he had lost their way.
But now, the' illustrious Nymph, return'd again,
Brings every grace triumphant in her train.
The wondering Nereids, though they rais'd no storm,
Foreflow'd her passage to behold her form.
Some cried, 'a Venus!' some, 'a Thetis past!'
But this was not so fair, nor that so chaste.
Far from her sight flew Faction, Strife, and Pride;
And Envy did but look on her, and died.
What'er we suffer'd from our sullen fate,
Her sight is purchas'd at an easy rate.
Three gloomy years against this day were set,
But this one mighty sum has clear'd the debt:
Like Joseph's dream, but with a better doom,
The famine past, the plenty still to come.
For her the weeping heavens become serene;
For her the ground is clad in cheerful green:
For her the nightingales are taught to sing,
And Nature has for her delay'd the Spring.
The Muse resumes her long-forgotten lays,
And Love, restor'd, his ancient realms surveys,
Recals our beauties, and revives our plays;
His waste dominions peoples once again,
And from her presence dates his second reign.
But awful charms on her fair forehead sit,
Dispensing what she never will admit;
Pleasing, yet cold, like Cynthia's silver beam,
The people's wonder, and the poet's theme.
Distemper'd Zeal, Sedition, canker'd Hate,
No more shall vex the church and tear the state;

No more shall Faction civil discords move,
Or only discords of too tender love;
Discord, like that of music's various parts;
Discord that makes the harmony of hearts;
Discord, that only this dispute shall bring,
Who best shall love the Duke, and serve the King!

TO MY FRIEND,

MR. JOHN NORTHLEIGH,

AUTHOR OF 'THE PARALLEL:' ON HIS TRIUMPH OF THE BRITISH MONARCHY, 1685.

So Joseph, yet a youth, expounded well
The boding dream, and did the' event foretel;
Judg'd by the past, and drew the parallel.
Thus early Solomon the truth explor'd,
The right awarded, and the babe restor'd.
Thus Daniel ere to prophecy he grew,
The perjur'd presbyters did first subdue,
And freed Susanna from the canting crew.
Well may our monarchy triumphant stand,
While warlike James protects both sea and land;
And under covert of his seven-fold shield,
Thou send'st thy shaft to scour the distant field,
By law thy powerful pen has set us free;
Thou study'st that, and that may study thee.

TO MR. SOUTHERN.

ON HIS COMEDY CALLED 'THE WIVES' EXCUSE.'

1692.

Sure there's a fate in plays, and 'tis in vain
To write, while these malignant planets reign.
Some very foolish influence rules the pit,
Not always kind to sense, or just to wit;
And whilst it lasts let buffoonry succeed
To make us laugh; for never was more need.
The Spanish Nymph, a wit and beauty too,
With all her charms bore but a single show;
But let a monster Muscovite appear,
He draws a crouded audience round the year.
May be thou hast not pleas'd the box and pit;
Yet those who blame thy tale applaud thy wit:
So Terence plotted, but so Terence writ.
Like his thy thoughts are true, thy language clean:
E'en lewdness is made moral in thy scene.
The hearers may for want of Nokes repine,
But rest secure the readers will be thine.
Nor was thy labour'd drama damn'd or hiss'd,
But with a kind civility dismiss'd;
With such good manners as the wife did use,
Who, not accepting, did but just refuse.
There was a glance at parting; such a look,
As bids thee not give o'er for one rebuke.
But if thou wouldst be seen as well as read,
Copy one living author and one dead:

The standard of thy style let Etherege be;
For wit, the' immortal spring of Wycherly:
Learn, after both, to draw some just design,
And the next age will learn to copy thine.

TO HENRY HIGDEN, ESQ.

ON HIS TRANSLATION OF THE TENTH SATIRE OF JUVENAL.

The Grecian wits, who satire first began,
Were pleasant Pasquins on the life of man;
At mighty villains, who the state opprest,
They durst not rail; perhaps they lash'd, at least,
And turn'd them out of office—with a jest.
No fool could peep abroad, but ready stand
The drolls to clap a bauble in his hand.
Wise legislators never yet could draw
A fop within the reach of Common-law;
For posture, dress, grimace, and affectation,
Though foes to sense, are harmless to the nation.
Our last redress is dint of verse to try,
And satire is our court of Chancery.
This way took Horace to reform an age,
Not bad enough to need an author's rage.
But yours, who liv'd in more degenerate times,
Was forc'd to fasten deep, and worry crimes.
Yet you, my friend, have temper'd him so well,
You make him smile, in spite of all his zeal;
An art peculiar to yourself alone,
To join the virtues of two styles in one.
Oh! were your author's principle receiv'd
Half of the labouring world would be reliev'd!
For not to wish, is not to be deceiv'd.

Revenge would into charity be chang'd,
Because it costs too dear to be reveng'd:
It costs our quiet and content of mind,
And, when 'tis compass'd, leaves a sting behind.
Suppose I had the better end o' th' staff,
Why should I help the' ill-natur'd world to laugh?
'Tis all alike to them who get the day;
They love the spite and mischief of the fray.
No; I have cur'd myself of that disease,
Nor will I be provok'd—but when I please;
But let me half that cure to you restore,
You gave the salve, I laid it to the sore.
Our kind relief against a rainy day,
Beyond a tavern, or a tedious play,
We take our book, and laugh our spleen away.
If all your tribe, too studious of debate,
Would cease false hopes and titles to create,
Led by the rare example you begun,
Clients would fail, and lawyers be undone.

TO MY

DEAR FRIEND, MR. CONGREVE,

ON HIS COMEDY CALLED 'THE DOUBLE DEALER.'
1694.

Well then, the promis'd hour is come at last,
The present age of wit obscures the past:
Strong were our sires, and as they fought they writ,
Conquering with force of arms and dint of wit:
Theirs was the giant race before the flood;
And thus, when Charles return'd, our empire stood.

Like Janus he the stubborn soil manur'd,
With rules of husbandry the rankness cur'd;
Tam'd us to manners when the stage was rude,
And boisterous English wit with art endued,
Our age was cultivated thus at length,
But what we gain'd in skill, we lost in strength.
Our builders were with want of genius curs'd;
The second temple was not like the first:
Till you, the best Vitruvius, come at length,
Our beauties equal, but excel our strength.
Firm Doric pillars found your solid base,
The fair Corinthian crowns the higher space;
Thus all below is strength, and all above is grace.
In easy dialogue is Fletcher's praise;
He mov'd the mind, but had not power to raise:
Great Jonson did by strength of judgment please;
Yet, doubling Fletcher's force, he wants his ease.
In differing talents both adorn'd their age;
One for the study, t'other for the stage.
But both to Congreve justly shall submit,
One match'd in judgment, both o'ermatch'd in wit;
In him all beauties of this age we see,
Etherege's courtship, Southern's purity,
The satire, wit, and strength of manly Wycherly.
All this in blooming youth you have achiev'd;
Nor are your foil'd contemporaries griev'd.
So much the sweetness of your manners move,
We cannot envy you, because we love.
Fabius might joy in Scipio, when he saw
A beardless consul made against the law,
And join his suffrage to the votes of Rome,
Though he with Hannibal was overcome.
Thus old Romano bow'd to Raphael's fame,
And scholar to the youth he taught became.

O that your brows my laurel had sustain'd!
Well had I been depos'd, if you had reign'd:
The father had descended for the son,
For only you are lineal to the throne.
Thus when the state one Edward did depose,
A greater Edward in his room arose.
But now, not I, but Poetry is curs'd;
For Tom the Second reigns like Tom the First.
But let 'em not mistake my patron's part,
Nor call his charity their own desert.
Yet this I prophecy,—thou shalt be seen
(Though with some short parenthesis between)
High on the throne of Wit; and seated there,
Not mine, (that's little) but thy laurel wear.
Thy first attempt an early promise made;
That early promise this has more than paid.
So bold, yet so judiciously you dare,
That your least praise is to be regular.
Time, place, and action, may with pains be wrought,
But genius must be born, and never can be taught.
This is your portion, this your native store;
Heaven, that but once was prodigal before,
To Shakspeare gave as much: she could not give him more!
Maintain your post, that's all the fame you need;
For 'tis impossible you should proceed.
Already I am worn with cares and age,
And just abandoning the' ungrateful stage.
Unprofitably kept at Heaven's expense,
I live a rent-charge on his Providence:
But you, whom every Muse and Grace adorn,
Whom I foresee to better fortune born,
Be kind to my remains; and O defend,
Against your judgment, your departed friend!

Let not the' insulting foe my fame pursue,
But shade those laurels which descend to you;
And take for tribute what these lines express;
You merit more, nor could my love do less.

*TO MR. GRANVILLE**,

ON HIS EXCELLENT TRAGEDY CALLED 'HEROIC LOVE.'
1698.

Auspicious Poet, wert thou not my friend,
How could I envy what I must commend?
But since 'tis nature's law, in love and wit,
That youth should reign, and withering age submit,
With less regret those laurels I resign,
Which, dying on my brows, revive on thine.
With better grace an ancient chief may yield
The long-contended honours of the field,
Than venture all his fortune at a cast,
And fight, like Hannibal, to lose at last.
Young princes, obstinate to win the prize,
Though yearly beaten, yearly yet they rise:
Old monarchs, though successful, still in doubt,
Catch at a peace, and wisely turn devout.
Thine be the laurel, then; thy blooming age
Can best, if any can, support the stage;
Which so declines, that shortly we may see
Players and plays reduc'd to second infancy.
Sharp to the world, but thoughtless of renown,
They plot not on the stage, but on the Town,
And, in despair their empty pit to fill,
Set up some foreign monster in a bill.

* Afterwards Lord Lansdown.

Thus they jog on, still tricking, never thriving,
And murdering plays, which they miscall—reviving.
Our sense is nonsense through their pipes convey'd;
Scarce can a poet know the play he made,
'Tis so disguis'd in death: nor thinks 'tis he
That suffers in the mangled tragedy.
Thus Itys first was kill'd, and after dress'd
For his own sire, the chief invited guest.
I say not this of thy successful scenes,
Where thine was all the glory, theirs the gains.
With length of time, much judgment, and more toil,
Not ill they acted what they could not spoil.
Their setting-sun still shoots a glimmering ray,
Like ancient Rome, majestic in decay;
And better gleanings their worn soil can boast
Than the crab-vintage of the neighbouring coast.
This difference yet the judging world will see,
Thou copiest Homer, and they copy thee.

TO MY FRIEND

MR. MOTTEUX,

ON HIS TRAGEDY CALLED 'BEAUTY IN DISTRESS.'

1698.

'Tis hard, my friend, to write in such an age
As damns not only poets, but the stage.
That sacred art, by Heaven itself infus'd,
Which Moses, David, Solomon, have us'd,
Is now to be no more. The Muses' foes
Would sink their Makers' praises into prose.

Were they content to prune the lavish vine
Of straggling branches, and improve the wine,
Who, but a madman, would his thoughts defend?
All would submit; for all but fools will mend:
But when to common sense they give the lie,
And turn distorted words to blasphemy,
They give the scandal, and the wise discern
Their glosses teach an age too apt to learn.
What I have loosely or profanely writ,
Let them to fires (their due desert) commit:
Nor, when accus'd by me, let them complain;
Their faults, and not their function, I arraign.
Rebellion, worse than witchcraft they pursued;
The pulpit preach'd the crime the people rued.
The stage was silenc'd; for the saints would see
In fields perform'd their plotted tragedy.

But let us first reform, and then so live,
That we may teach our teachers to forgive:
Our desk be plac'd below their lofty chairs;
Ours be the practice, as the precept theirs.
The moral part, at least, we may divide,
Humility reward, and punish pride;
Ambition, interest, avarice accuse;
These are the province of a Tragic Muse.
These hast thou chosen; and the public voice
Has equall'd thy performance with thy choice.
Time, action, place, are so preserv'd by thee,
That e'en Cornëille might with envy see
The' alliance of his tripled unity.
Thy incidents, perhaps, too thick are sown;
But too much plenty is thy fault alone:
At least but two can that good crime commit,
Thou in design, and Wycherly in wit.

Let thy own Gauls condemn thee if they dare,
Contented to be thinly regular.
Born there, but not for them, our fruitful soil
With more increase rewards thy happy toil.
Their tongue, enfeebled, is refin'd too much,
And, like pure gold, it bends at every touch:
Our sturdy Teuton yet will art obey,
More fit for manly thought, and strengthen'd with allay.
But whence art thou inspir'd, and thou alone,
To flourish in an idiom not thy own?
It moves our wonder that a foreign guest
Should overmatch the most, and match the best.
In under-praising thy deserts I wrong;
Here find the first deficience of our tongue;
Words, once my stock, are wanting to commend
So great a poet, and so good a friend.

TO MY

HONOURED KINSMAN, JOHN DRYDEN,

OF CHESTERTON, IN THE COUNTY OF HUNTINGDON, ESQ.

How bless'd is he who leads a country life,
Unvex'd with anxious cares, and void of strife!
Who, studying peace and shunning civil rage,
Enjoy'd his youth, and now enjoys his age?
All who deserve his love he makes his own,
And, to be lov'd himself, needs only to be known.

Just, good, and wise, contending neighbours come,
From your award, to wait their final doom,
And, foes before, return in friendship home.
Without their cost you terminate the cause,
And save the' expense of long litigious laws;
Where suits are travers'd, and so little won,
That he who conquers is but last undone.
Such are not your decrees; but, so design'd,
The sanction leaves a lasting peace behind,
Like your own soul, serene, a pattern of your mind.

Promoting concord, and composing strife,
Lord of yourself, uncumber'd with a wife;
Where, for a year, a month, perhaps a night,
Long penitence succeeds a short delight;
Minds are so hardly match'd, that e'en the first,
Though pair'd by Heaven, in Paradise were curst:
For man and woman, though in one they grow,
Yet, first or last, return again to two:
He to God's image, she to his was made;
So farther from the fount the stream at random stray'd.

How could he stand, when, put to double pain,
He must a weaker than himself sustain?
Each might have stood perhaps; but, each alone;
Two wrestlers help to pull each other down.

Not that my verse would blemish all the fair;
But yet, if some be bad, 'tis wisdom to beware;
And better shun the bait than struggle in the snare.
Thus have you shun'd, and shun the married state,
Trusting as little as you can—to Fate.

No porter guards the passage of your door,
To' admit the wealthy and exclude the poor;

For God, who gave the riches, gave the heart
To sanctify the whole, by giving part;
Heaven, who foresaw the will, the means has wrought,
And to the second son a blessing brought:
The first-begotten had his father's share,
But you, like Jacob, are Rebecca's heir.
So may your stores and fruitful fields increase,
And ever be you bless'd, who live to bless.
As Ceres sow'd, where'er her chariot flew;
As Heaven in deserts rain'd the bread of dew;
So, free to many, to relations most,
You feed with manna your own Israel-host.
With crowds attended, of your ancient race,
You seek the champion sports or silvan chase:
With well-breath'd beagles you surround the wood,
E'en then industrious of the common good;
And often have you brought the wily fox
To suffer for the firstlings of the flocks;
Chas'd e'en amid the folds, and made to bleed,
Like felons, where they did the murderous deed.
This fiery game your active youth maintain'd,
Not yet by years extinguish'd, though restrain'd;
You season still with sports your serious hours;
For age but tastes of pleasures, youth devours.
The hare in pastures or in plains is found,
Emblem of human life, who runs the round,
And, after all his wandering ways are done,
His circle fills, and ends where he begun,
Just as the setting meets the rising sun.
Thus princes ease their cares; but happier he
Who seeks not pleasure through necessity,
Than such as once on slippery thrones were plac'd,
And chasing, sigh to think themselves are chas'd.

So liv'd our sires, ere doctors learn'd to kill,
And multiplied with theirs the weekly bill.
The first physicians by debauch were made;
Excess began, and sloth sustains the trade.
Pity the generous kind their cares bestow
To search forbidden truths; (a sin to know)
To which if human science could attain,
The doom of death, pronounc'd by God, were vain:
In vain the leech would interpose delay;
Fate fastens first, and vindicates the prey.
What help from Art's endeavours can we have?
Gibbons* but guesses, nor is sure to save;
But Maurus sweeps whole parishes, and peoples every grave,
And no more mercy to mankind will use,
Than when he robb'd and murder'd Maro's muse.
Wouldst thou be soon dispatch'd, and perish whole,
Trust Maurus with thy life, and Milbourn† with thy soul.

By chase our long-liv'd fathers earn'd their food,
Toil strung the nerves, and purificd the blood;
But we, their sons, a pamper'd race of men,
Are dwindled down to threcscore years and ten.
Better to hunt in fields for health unbought,
Than fee the doctor for a nauseous draught.
The wise, for cure, on exercise depend:
God never made his work for man to mend.

The tree of Knowledge, once in Eden plac'd,
Was easy found, but was forbid the taste:

* Dr. W. Gibbons succeeded Ratcliffe as physician to Queen Anne, and died March 25, 1728.

† The Rev. Luke Milbourn wrote notes on Dryden's Virgil, &c. and died April 15, 1720.

O, had our grandsire walk'd without his wife,
He first had sought the better plant of Life!
Now both are lost; yet, wandering in the dark,
Physicians, for the tree, have found the bark:
They, labouring for relief of humankind,
With sharpen'd sight some remedies may find:
The' apothecary-train is wholly blind.
From files a random recipe they take,
And many deaths of one prescription make.
Garth, generous as his muse, prescribes and gives;
The shopman sells, and by destruction lives.
Ungrateful tribe! who, like the viper's brood,
From med'cine issuing, suck their mother's blood!
Let these obey, and let the learn'd prescribe,
That men may die without a double bribe;
Let them, but under their superiors, kill,
When doctors first have sign'd the bloody bill:
He 'scapes the best who, nature to repair,
Draws physic from the fields in draughts of vital air.

You hoard not health for your own private use,
But on the public spend the rich produce.
When, often urg'd, unwilling to be great,
Your country calls you from your lov'd retreat,
And sends to senates, charg'd with common care,
Which none more shuns, and none can better bear,
Where could they find another form'd so fit
To poise, with solid sense, a sprightly wit?
Were these both wanting, as they both abound,
Where could so firm integrity be found?
Well-born and wealthy, wanting no support,
You steer betwixt the country and the court;
Nor gratify whate'er the great desire,
Nor, grudging, give what public needs require.

Part must be left, a fund, when foes invade,
And part employ'd to roll the watery trade:
E'en Canaan's happy land, when worn with toil,
Requir'd a sabbath-year to mend the meagre soil.
Good senators (and such as you) so give,
That kings may be supplied, the people thrive.
And he, when want requires, is truly wise,
Who slights not foreign aids, nor over-buys,
But on our native strength in time of need relies.
Munster was bought; we boast not the success;
Who fights for gain, for greater makes his peace.
Our foes, compell'd by need, have peace embrac'd:
The peace both parties want, is like to last;
Which, if secure, securely we may trade;
Or, not secure, should never have been made.
Safe in ourselves, while on ourselves we stand,
The sea is ours, and that defends the land.
Be, then, the naval stores the nation's care,
New ships to build, and batter'd to repair.
Observe the war in every annual course;
What has been done was done with British force.
Namur subdued—is England's palm alone;
The rest besieg'd, but we constrain'd the town.
We saw the' event that follow'd our success;
France, though pretending arms, pursu'd the peace;
Oblig'd, by one sole treaty, to restore
What twenty years of war had won before.
Enough for Europe has our Albion fought;
Let us enjoy the peace our blood has bought.
When once the Persian king was put to flight,
The weary Macedons refus'd to fight;
Themselves their own mortality confess'd,
And left the son of Jove to quarrel for the rest.

E'en victors are by victories undone;
Thus Hannibal, with foreign laurels won,
To Carthage was recall'd, too late to keep his own.
While sore of battle, while our wounds are green,
Why should we tempt the doubtful die again?
In wars renew'd, uncertain of success,
Sure of a share, as umpires of the peace.
A patriot both the king and country serves,
Prerogative and privilege preserves;
Of each our laws the certain limit show;
One must not ebb, nor t'other overflow:
Betwixt the prince and parliament we stand,
The barriers of the state on either hand;
May neither overflow, for then they drown the land.
When both are full, they feed our bless'd abode,
Like those that water'd once the paradise of God.
Some overpoise of sway, by turns, they share;
In peace, the people; and the prince, in war:
Consuls of moderate power in calms were made;
When the Gauls came, one sole Dictator sway'd.
Patriots in peace assert the people's right,
With noble stubbornness resisting might;
No lawless mandates from the Court receive,
Nor lend by force, but in a body give.
Such was your generous grandsire; free to grant,
In parliaments that weigh'd their prince's want;
But so tenacious of the common cause,
As not to lend the king against his laws;
And, in a loathsome dungeon doom'd to lie,
In bonds retain'd his birthright liberty,
And sham'd Oppression till it set him free.
O true descendant of a patriot line! [thine,
Who, while thou shar'st their lustre, lend'st them

Vouchsafe this picture of thy soul to see,
'Tis so far good, as it resembles thee;
The beauties to the' original I owe,
Which when I miss, my own defects I show.
Nor think the kindred Muses thy disgrace;
A poet is not born in every race:
Two of a house few ages can afford,
One to perform, another to record.
Praise-worthy actions are by thee embrac'd,
And 'tis my praise to make thy praises last:
For ev'n when death dissolves our human frame,
The soul returns to Heaven, from whence it came;
Earth keeps the body, Verse preserves the fame.

TO

SIR GODFREY KNELLER,

PRINCIPAL PAINTER TO HIS MAJESTY.

Once I beheld the fairest of her kind,
And still the sweet idea charms my mind:
True, she was dumb; for Nature gaz'd so long,
Pleas'd with her work, that she forgot her tongue;
But, smiling, said, 'She still shall gain the prize;
I only have transferr'd it to her eyes.'
Such are thy pictures, Kneller; such thy skill,
That Nature seems obedient to thy will;
Comes out, and meets thy pencil in the draught;
Lives there, and wants but words to speak her thought.

At least thy pictures look a voice; and we
Imagine sounds, deceiv'd to that degree,
We think 'tis somewhat more than just to see.
Shadows are but privations of the light,
Yet, when we walk, they shoot before the sight;
With us approach, retire, arise, and fall;
Nothing themselves, and yet expressing all.
Such are thy pieces, imitating life
So near, they almost conquer in the strife;
And from their animated canvas came
Demanding souls, and loosen'd from the frame.
Prometheus, were he here, would cast away
His Adam, and refuse a soul to clay;
And either would thy nobler work inspire,
Or think it warm enough without his fire.
But vulgar hands may vulgar likeness raise;
This is the least attendant on thy praise;
From hence the rudiments of Art began;
A coal, or chalk, first imitated man:
Perhaps the shadow, taken on a wall,
Gave outlines to the rude original;
Ere canvas yet was stain'd, before the grace
Of blended colours found their use and place,
Or Cypress-tablets first receiv'd a face.
By slow degrees the godlike art advanc'd;
As man grew polish'd, picture was enhanc'd:
Greece added posture, shade, and perspective;
And then the mimic-piece began to live.
Yet perspective was lame, no distance true,
But all came forward in one common view:
No point of light was known, no bounds of art;
When light was there, it knew not to depart,
But glaring, on remoter objects play'd;
Not languish'd, and insensibly decay'd.

Rome rais'd not Art, but barely kept alive,
And with old Greece unequally did strive;
Till Goths and Vandals, a rude northern race,
Did all the matchless monuments deface:
Then all the Muses in one ruin lie,
And rhyme began to' enervate poetry.
Thus, in a stupid military state,
The pen and pencil find an equal fate:
Flat faces, such as would disgrace a screen,
Such as in Bantam's embassy were seen,
Unrais'd, unrounded, were the rude delight
Of brutal nations, only born to fight.
Long time the Sister Arts, in iron sleep,
A heavy sabbath did supinely keep;
At length, in Raphael's age, at once they rise,
Stretch all their limbs, and open all their eyes.
Thence rose the Roman and the Lombard line;
One colour'd best, and one did best design.
Raphael's, like Homer's, was the nobler part,
But Titian's painting look'd like Virgil's art.
Thy genius gives thee both: where true design,
Postures unforc'd, and lively colours join,
Likeness is ever there; but still the best,
Like proper thoughts in lofty language drest;
Where light, to shades descending, plays, not strives,
Dies by degrees, and by degrees revives,
Of various parts a perfect whole is wrought:
Thy pictures think, and we divine their thought.
Shakspeare, thy gift, I place before my sight;
With awe I ask his blessing ere I write;
With reverence look on his majestic face,
Proud to be less, but of his godlike race.
His soul inspires me while thy praise I write,
And I, like Teucer, under Ajax fight;

Bids thee, through me, be bold; with dauntless breast
Contemn the bad, and emulate the best.
Like his, thy critics in the' attempt are lost;
When most they rail, know then they envy most.
In vain they snarl aloof; a noisy crowd,
Like women's anger, impotent and loud.
While they their barren industry deplore,
Pass on secure, and mind the goal before.
Old as she is, my Muse shall march behind,
Bear off the blast, and intercept the wind.
Our arts are sisters, though not twins in birth,
For hymns were sung in Eden's happy earth:
But, oh, the painter-muse, though last in place,
Has seiz'd the blessing first, like Jacob's race.
Apelles' art an Alexander found,
And Raphael did with Leo's gold abound,
But Homer was with barren laurel crown'd.
Thou hadst thy Charles awhile, and so had I;
But pass we that unpleasing image by.
Rich in thyself, and of thyself divine,
All pilgrims come and offer at thy shrine.
A graceful truth thy pencil can command;
The fair themselves go mended from thy hand.
Likeness appears in every lineament;
But likeness in thy work is eloquent.
Though Nature there her true resemblance bears,
A nobler beauty in thy piece appears.
So warm thy work, so glows the generous frame,
Flesh looks less living in the lovely dame.
Thou paint'st as we describe, improving still,
When on wild Nature we ingraft our skill,
But not creating beauties at our will.
But poets are confin'd in narrower space,
To speak the language of their native place:

The painter widely stretches his command;
Thy pencil speaks the tongue of every land.
From hence, my friend, all climates are your own.
Nor can you forfeit, for you hold of none.
All nations, all immunities, will give
To make you theirs, where'er you please to live;
And not seven cities, but the world, would strive.

Sure some propitious planet then did smile,
When first you were conducted to this isle:
Our Genius brought you here, to' enlarge our fame;
For your good stars are every where the same.
Thy matchless hand, of every region free,
Adopts our climate, not our climate thee.

Great Rome and Venice early did impart
To thee the' examples of their wondrous art,
Those masters then, but seen, not understood,
With generous emulation fir'd thy blood:
For what, in Nature's dawn, the child admir'd,
The youth endeavour'd, and the man acquir'd.

If yet thou hast not reach'd their high degree,
'Tis only wanting to this age, not thee.
Thy genius, bounded by the times, like mine,
Drudges on petty draughts, nor dare design
A more exalted work, and more divine.
For what a song, or senseless opera,
Is to the living labour of a play;
Or what a play to Virgil's work would be,
Such is a single piece to History.

But we, who life bestow, ourselves must live:
Kings cannot reign, unless their subjects give;
And they who pay the taxes bear the rule:
Thus thou, sometimes, art forc'd to draw a fool;
But so his follies in thy posture sink,
The senseless idiot seems at last to think.

Good Heaven! that sots and knaves should be so vain,
To wish their vile resemblance may remain!
And stand recorded, at their own request,
To future days, a libel or a jest!
Else should we see your noble pencil trace
Our unities of action, time, and place;
A whole compos'd of parts, and those the best,
With every various character exprest:
Heroes at large, and at a nearer view;
Less, and at distance, an ignobler crew;
While all the figures in one action join,
As tending to complete the main design.
More cannot be by mortal Art exprest;
But venerable Age shall add the rest:
For Time shall with his ready pencil stand,
Retouch your figures with his ripening hand,
Mellow your colours, and imbrown the teint,
Add every grace which Time alone can grant;
To future ages shall your fame convey,
And give more beauties than he takes away.

PROLOGUES.

SPOKEN THE FIRST DAY OF THE

KING'S HOUSE ACTING AFTER THE FIRE.

So shipwreck'd passengers escape to land,
So look they, when on the bare beach they stand
Dropping and cold, and, their first fear scarce o'er,
Expecting famine on a desert shore.
From that hard climate we must wait for bread,
Whence e'en the natives, forc'd by hunger, fled.
Our stage does human chance present to view,
But ne'er before was seen so sadly true:
You are chang'd too, and your pretence to see
Is but a nobler name for charity.
Your own provisions furnish out our feasts,
While you, the founders, make yourselves the guests.
Of all mankind beside, Fate had some care,
But for poor Wit no portion did prepare;
'Tis left a rent-charge to the brave and fair.
You cherish'd it, and now its fall you mourn,
Which blind unmanner'd zealots make their scorn;
Who think that fire a judgment on the stage,
Which spar'd not temples in its furious rage.

But as our new-built City rises higher,
So from old theatres may new aspire,
Since Fate contrives magnificence by fire.
Our great Metropolis does far surpass
Whate'er is now, and equals all that was:
Our wit as far does foreign wit excel,
And, like a king, should in a palace dwell.
But we with golden hopes are vainly fed,
Talk high, and entertain you in a shed:
Your presence here, for which we humbly sue,
Will grace old theatres, and build up new.

SPOKEN AT THE

OPENING OF THE NEW HOUSE,

MARCH 26, 1674.

A PLAIN-BUILT house, after so long a stay,
Will send you half unsatisfied away;
When, fall'n from your expected pomp, you find
A bare convenience only is design'd.
You, who each day can theatres behold,
Like Nero's palace, shining all with gold,
Our mean ungilded stage will scorn, we fear,
And, for the homely room, disdain the cheer.
Yet now cheap druggets to a mode are grown,
And a plain suit (since we can make but one)
Is better than to be by tarnish'd gawdry known.
They who are by your favours wealthy made
With mighty sums, may carry on the trade:

We, broken bankers, half destroy'd by fire,
With our small stock to humble roofs retire;
Pity our loss, while you their pomp admire.
For fame and honour we no longer strive,
We yield in both, and only beg to live:
Unable to support their vast expense,
Who build and treat with such magnificence;
That, like the' ambitious monarchs of the age,
They give the law to our provincial stage.
Great neighbours enviously promote excess,
While they impose their splendour on the less:
But only fools, and they of vast estate,
The' extremity of modes will imitate,
The dangling knee-fringe, and the bib-cravat.
Yet if some pride with want may be allow'd,
We in our plainness may be justly proud:
Our Royal Master will'd it should be so;
Whate'er he's pleas'd to own, can need no show:
That sacred name gives ornament and grace,
And, like his stamp, makes basest metals pass.
'Twere folly now a stately pile to raise,
To build a playhouse, while you throw down plays;
While scenes, machines, and empty operas reign,
And for the pencil you the pen disdain;
While troops of famish'd Frenchmen hither drive,
And laugh at those upon whose alms they live;
Old English authors vanish, and give place
To these new conquerors of the Norman race:
More tamely than your fathers you submit;
You're now grown vassals to them in your wit.
Mark, when they play, how our fine fops advance
The mighty merits of their men of France,
Keep time, cry *Bon*, and humour the cadence.

Well, please yourselves; but sure 'tis understood,
That French machines have ne'er done England good.
I would not prophesy our House's fate;
But while vain shows and scenes you over-rate,
'Tis to be fear'd—
That as a fire the former House o'erthrew,
Machines and tempests will destroy the New.

TO THE

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

1674.

SPOKEN BY MR. HART.

Poets, your subjects, have their parts assign'd
To' unbend, and to divert their sovereign's mind:
When, tir'd with following Nature, you think fit
To seek repose in the cool shades of Wit,
And, from the sweet retreat, with joy survey
What rests, and what is conquer'd, of the way.
Here, free yourselves from envy, care, and strife,
You view the various turns of human life:
Safe in our scene, through dangerous courts you go,
And, undebauch'd, the vice of cities know.
Your theories are here to practice brought,
As in mechanic operations wrought;
And man, the little world, before you set,
As once the sphere of crystal show'd the great.

Blest, sure, are you above all mortal kind,
If to your fortunes you can suit your mind;
Content to see, and shun those ills we show,
And crimes on theatres alone to know.
With joy we bring what our dead authors writ,
And beg from you the value of their wit;
That Shakspeare's, Fletcher's, and great Jonson's claim
May be renew'd from those who gave them fame.
None of our living poets dare appear;
For Muses so severe are worshipp'd here,
That, conscious of their faults, they shun the eye,
And, as profane, from sacred places fly,
Rather than see the' offended God, and die.
We bring no imperfections but our own;
Such faults as made are by the makers shown:
And you have been so kind, that we may boast,
The greatest judges still can pardon most.
Poets must stoop, when they would please our pit,
Debas'd ev'n to the level of their wit;
Disdaining that, which yet they know will take,
Hating themselves what their applause must make:
But when to praise from you they would aspire,
Though they like eagles mount, your Jove is higher.
So far your knowledge all their power transcends,
As what *should be* beyond what *is* extends.

TO CIRCE.

BY DR. DAVENANT, 1675.

Were you but half so wise as you're severe,
Our youthful poet should not need to fear:
To his green years your censures you would suit,
Not blast the blossom, but expect the fruit.
The sex, that best does pleasure understand,
Will always choose to err on the' other hand.
They check not him that's awkward in delight,
But clap the young rogue's cheek, and set him right:
Thus hearten'd well, and flesh'd upon his prey,
The youth may prove a man another day.
Your Ben and Fletcher, in their first young flight,
Did no Volpone, nor no Arbaces write;
But hopp'd about, and short excursions made
From bough to bough, as if they were afraid,
And each was guilty of some slighted maid.
Shakspeare's own Muse her Pericles first bore;
The Prince of Tyre was elder than the Moor.
'Tis miracle to see a first good play:
All hawthorns do not bloom on Christmas-day.
A slender poet must have time to grow,
And spread and burnish as his brothers do.
Who still looks lean, sure with some p—x is curst;
But no man can be Falstaff-fat at first.
Then damn not, but indulge his rude essays,
Encourage him, and bloat him up with praise,
That he may get more bulk before he dies;
He's not yet fed enough for sacrifice.
Perhaps, if now your grace you will not grudge,
He may grow up to write, and you to judge.

TO CÆSAR BORGIA.

BY N. LEE, 1680.

The' unhappy man, who once has trail'd a pen,
Lives not to please himself, but other men;
Is always drudging, wastes his life and blood,
Yet only eats and drinks what you think good.
What praise soe'er the poetry deserve,
Yet every fool can bid the poet starve.
That fumbling letcher to revenge is bent,
Because he thinks himself, or whore, is meant:
Name but a cuckold, all the City swarms;
From Leaden-hall to Ludgate is in arms.
Were there no fear of Antichrist or France,
In the blest time poor poets live by chance.
Either you come not here, or, as you grace
Some old acquaintance, drop into the place,
Careless and qualmish, with a yawning face:
You sleep o'er wit, and, by my troth, you may;
Most of your talents lie another way.
You love to hear of some prodigious tale,
The bell that toll'd alone, or Irish whale.
News is your food, and you enough provide,
Both for yourselves, and all the world beside.
One theatre there is of vast resort,
Which, whilom, of Requests was call'd the Court;
But now the great Exchange of News 'tis hight,
And full of hum and buz from noon till night.
Up stairs and down you run, as for a race,
And each man wears three nations in his face.

So big you look, though claret you retrench,
That, arm'd with bottled ale, you huff the French.
But all your entertainment still is fed
By villains in your own dull island bred.
Would you return to us, we dare engage
To show you better rogues upon the stage.
You know no poison but plain ratsbane here;
Death's more refin'd, and better bred elsewhere.
They have a civil way in Italy,
By smelling a perfume, to make you die;
A trick would make you lay your snuff-box by.
Murder's a trade so known and practis'd there,
That 'tis infallible—as is the Chair.
But, mark their feast, you shall behold such pranks;
The Pope says grace, but 'tis the Devil gives thanks.

TO SOPHONISBA.

AT OXFORD, 1680.

Thespis, the first professor of our art,
At country-wakes sung ballads from a cart.
To prove this true, if Latin be no trespass,
Dicitur et plaustris vixisse poëmata Thespis.
But Æschylus, says Horace, in some page,
Was the first mountebank that trod the stage;
Yet Athens never knew your learned sport
Of tossing poets in a tennis-court.
But 'tis the talent of our English nation,
Still to be plotting some new reformation:
And few years hence, if anarchy goes on,
Jack Presbyter shall here erect his throne,

Knock out a tub with preaching once a day,
And every prayer be longer than a play.
Then all your Heathen-wits shall go to pot,
For disbelieving of a Popish-plot:
Your poets shall be us'd like Infidels,
And worst, the author of the Oxford Bells:
Nor should we 'scape the sentence, to depart,
E'en in our first original,—a cart.
No zealous brother there would want a stone,
To maul us cardinals, and pelt Pope Joan:
Religion, learning, wit, would be suppress'd,
Rags of the Whore, and trappings of the Beast:
Scot, Suarez, Tom of Aquin, must go down,
As chief supporters of the Triple crown;
And Aristotle's for destruction ripe;
Some say, he call'd the soul an Organ-pipe.
Which, by some little help of derivation,
Shall then be prov'd a pipe of inspiration.

PROLOGUE.

If yet there be a few that take delight
In that which reasonable men should write,
To them alone we dedicate this night.
The rest may satisfy their curious itch
With city Gazettes, or some factious speech,
Or whate'er libel, for the public good,
Stirs up the Shrove-tide crew to fire and blood.
Remove your benches, you apostate pit,
And take, above, twelve pennyworth of wit;
Go back to your dear dancing on the rope,
Or see, what's worse, the Devil and the Pope.

The plays that take on our corrupted stage,
Methinks resemble the distracted age;
Noise, madness, all unreasonable things,
That strike at sense, as rebels do at kings.
The style of Forty-one our poets write,
And you are grown to judge like Forty-eight.
Such censures our mistaking audience make,
That 'tis almost grown scandalous to take.
They talk of fevers that infect the brains;
But nonsense is the new disease that reigns.
Weak stomachs, with a long disease opprest,
Cannot the cordials of strong wit digest:
Therefore, thin nourishment or Farce ye choose,
Decoctions of a barley-water Muse;
A meal of Tragedy would make you sick,
Unless it were a very tender chick.
Some scenes in sippets would be worth your time;
Those would go down; some love that's poach'd in rhyme:
If these should fail——
We must lie down, and after all our cost,
Keep holiday, like watermen in frost:
While you turn players on the world's great stage,
And act yourselves the farce of your own age.

TO THE

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, 1681.

The fam'd Italian Muse, whose rhymes advance
Orlando, and the Paladins of France,
Records, that when our wit and sense is flown,
'Tis lodg'd within the circle of the moon,

In earthen jars, which one, who thither soar'd,
Set to his nose, snuff'd up, and was restor'd.
Whate'er the story be, the moral's true;
The wit we lost in Town, we find in you.
Our poets their fled parts may draw from hence,
And fill their windy heads with sober sense.
When London votes with Southwark's disagree,
Here may they find their long-lost loyalty.
Here busy senates, to the' old cause inclin'd,
May snuff the votes their fellows left behind:
Your country neighbours, when their grain grows dear,
May come, and find their last provision here:
Whereas, we cannot much lament our loss,
Who neither carried back nor brought one cross.
We look'd what Representatives would bring,
But they help'd us just as they did the King.
Yet we despair not; for we now lay forth
The sibyls' books to those who know their worth;
And though the first was sacrific'd before,
These volumes doubly will the price restore.
Our poet bade us hope this grace to find,
To whom by long prescription you are kind.
He, whose undaunted Muse, with royal rage,
Has never spar'd the vices of the age,
Here finding nothing that his spleen can raise,
Is forc'd to turn his satire into praise.

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS,

UPON HIS FIRST APPEARANCE AT THE DUKE'S THEATRE, AFTER HIS RETURN FROM SCOTLAND, 1682.

In those cold regions which no summers cheer,
Where brooding Darkness covers half the year,
To hollow caves the shivering natives go;
Bears range abroad, and hunt in tracks of snow;
But when the tedious twilight wears away,
And stars grow paler at the' approach of day,
The longing crowds to frozen mountains run,
Happy who first can see the glimmering sun:
The surly, savage offspring disappear,
And curse the bright successor of the year.
Yet, though rough bears in covert seek defence,
White foxes stay, with seeming innocence;
That crafty kind with day-light can dispense.
Still we are throng'd so full with Reynard's race,
That loyal subjects scarce can find a place.
Thus modest truth is cast behind the crowd:
Truth speaks too low; Hypocrisy too loud.
Let them be first to flatter in success;
Duty can stay, but Guilt has need to press.
Once, when true zeal the sons of God did call,
To make their solemn show at Heaven's Whitehall,
The fawning Devil appear'd among the rest,
And made as good a courtier as the best.
The friends of Job, who rail'd at him before,
Come cap in hand, when he had three times more.
Yet late repentance may, perhaps, be true;
Kings can forgive, if rebels can but sue.

A tyrant's power in rigour is exprest;
The father yearns in the true prince's breast,
We grant an o'ergrown Whig no grace can mend:
But most are babes that know not they offend.
The crowd, to restless motion still inclin'd,
Are clouds that tack according to the wind.
Driven by their chiefs, they storms of hailstones pour,
Then mourn, and soften to a silent shower.
O welcome to this much-offending land,
The prince that brings forgiveness in his hand!
Thus angels on glad messages appear;
Their first salute commands us not to fear:
Thus Heaven, that could constrain us to obey,
(With reverence, if we might presume to say)
Seems to relax the rights of sovereign sway;
Permits to man the choice of good and ill,
And makes us happy by our own free-will.

TO THE EARL OF ESSEX.

BY J. BANKS, 1682.

SPOKEN TO THE KING AND QUEEN, AT THEIR COMING TO THE HOUSE.

When first the ark was landed on the shore,
And Heaven had vow'd to curse the ground no more;
When tops of hills the longing patriarch saw,
And the new scene of earth began to draw,
The dove was sent to view the waves' decrease,
And first brought back to man the pledge of peace.
'Tis needless to apply, when those appear
Who bring the olive, and who plant it here.

We have before our eyes the Royal dove,
Still innocent as harbinger of Love:
The ark is open'd to dismiss the train,
And people with a better race the plain.
Tell me, ye Powers, why should vain man pursue,
With endless toil, each object that is new,
And for the seeming substance leave the true?
Why should he quit for hopes his certain good,
And loath the manna of his daily food?
Must England still the scene of changes be,
Tost, and tempestuous, like our ambient sea?
Must still our weather and our wills agree?
Without our blood our liberties we have:
Who that is free would fight to be a slave?
Or, what can wars to after-times assure,
Of which our present age is not secure?
All that our Monarch would for us ordain,
Is but to' enjoy the blessings of his reign.
Our land's an Eden, and the main's our fence,
While we preserve our state of innocence:
That lost, then beasts their brutal force employ,
And first their lord, and then themselves destroy.
What civil broils have cost we know too well;
Oh! let it be enough that once we fell;
And every heart conspire, and every tongue,
Still to have such a King, and this King long.

TO

THE LOYAL BROTHER;

OR, THE PERSIAN PRINCE.

BY SOUTHERN, 1682.

Poets, like lawful monarchs, rul'd the stage,
Till Critics, like damn'd Whigs, debauch'd our age.
Mark how they jump: Critics would regulate
Our theatres, and Whigs reform our state:
Both pretend love, and both (plague rot them!) hate.
The Critic humbly seems advice to bring;
The fawning Whig petitions to the King:
But one's advice into a satire slides;
T'other's petition a remonstrance hides.
These will no taxes give, and those no pence;
Critics would starve the poet, Whigs the prince.
The Critic all our troops of friends discards;
Just so the Whig would fain pull down the guards.
Guards are illegal, that drive foes away,
As watchful shepherds, that fright beasts of prey.
Kings, who disband such needless aids as these,
Are safe—as long as e'er their subjects please;
And that would be till next Queen Bess's night,
Which thus grave penny chroniclers indite.
Sir Edmund Bury first, in woful wise,
Leads up the show, and milks their maudlin eyes.
There's not a butcher's wife but dribs her part,
And pities the poor pageant from her heart;
Who, to provoke revenge, rides round the fire,
And, with a civil congé, does retire.

But guiltless blood to ground must never fall;
There's Antichrist behind, to pay for all.
The punk of Babylon in pomp appears,
A lewd old gentleman of seventy years,
Whose age in vain our mercy would implore,
For few take pity on an old cast whore.
The devil, who brought him to the shame, takes part,
Sits cheek by jowl, in black, to cheer his heart,
Like thief and parson in a Tyburn-cart.
The word is given, and, with a loud huzza,
The mitred puppet from his chair they draw:
On the slain corpse contending nations fall:
Alas! what's one poor Pope among them all!
He burns; now all true hearts your triumphs ring;
And next (for fashion) cry, 'God save the King.'
A needful cry in midst of such alarms,
When forty thousand men are up in arms.
But after he's once sav'd, to make amends,
In each succeeding health they damn his friends:
So God begins, but still the Devil ends.
What if some one, inspir'd with zeal, should call,
'Come, let's go cry—God save him, at Whitehall?'
His best friends would not like this over-care,
Or think him e'er the safer for this prayer.
Five praying saints are by an act allow'd;
But not the whole church-militant in crowd.
Yet, should Heaven all the true petitions drain
Of Presbyterians, who would kings maintain,
Of forty thousand, five would scarce remain.

TO THE

DUKE OF GUISE, 1683.

Our play's a parallel: the holy league
Begot our covenant: Guisards got the Wig:
Whate'er our hot-brain'd sheriffs did advance
Was, like our fashions, first produc'd in France;
And when worn out, well scourg'd, and banish'd there,
Sent over, like their godly beggars, here.
Could the same trick, twice play'd, our nation gull?
It looks as if the devil were grown dull,
Or serv'd us up, in scorn, his broken meat,
And thought we were not worth a better cheat.
The fulsome covenant, one would think, in reason,
Had given us all our bellies full of treason:
And yet, the name but chang'd, our nasty nation
Chaws its own excrement, the' association.
'Tis true, we have not learn'd their poisoning way,
For that's a mode but newly come in play:
Besides, your drug's uncertain to prevail;
But your true protestant can never fail,
With that compendious instrument—a flail.
Go on: and bite, e'en though the hook is bare;
Twice in one age expel the lawful heir:
Once more decide religion by the sword;
And purchase for us a new tyrant-lord.
Pray for your king; but yet your purses spare;
Make him not two-pence richer by your prayer.
To shew you love him much, chastise him more;
And make him very great, and very poor.
Push him to wars, but still no pence advance;
Let him lose England, to recover France.

Cry freedom up, with popular noisy votes;
And get enough to cut each others' throats.
Lop all the rights that fence your monarch's throne;
For fear of too much power, pray leave him none.
A noise was made of arbitrary sway;
But, in revenge, you Whigs have found a way
An arbitrary duty now to pay.
Let his own servants turn, to save their stake;
Glean from his plenty, and his wants forsake;
But let some Judas near his person stay,
To swallow the last sop, and then betray.
Make London independent of the crown:
A realm apart; the kingdom of the town.
Let ignoramus-juries find no traitors;
And ignoramus-poets scribble satires.
And, that your meaning none may fail to scan,
Do, what in coffee-houses you began,
Pull down the master, and set up the man.

TO THE

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

SPOKEN BY MR. HART, AT THE ACTING OF THE SILENT WOMAN.

What Greece, when learning flourish'd, only knew,
Athenian judges! you this day renew.
Here, too, are annual rites to Pallas done,
And here poetic prizes lost or won.
Methinks I see you, crown'd with olives, sit,
And strike a sacred horror from the pit.

A day of doom is this of your decree,
Where ev'n the best are but by mercy free:
A day which none but Jonson durst have wish'd to see.
Here they, who long have known the useful stage,
Come to be taught themselves, to teach the age.
As your commissioners, our poets go
To cultivate the virtue which you sow;
In your Lycæum first themselves refin'd,
And delegated thence to humankind.
But as ambassadors, when long from home,
For new instructions to their princes come;
So poets, who your precepts have forgot,
Return, and beg they may be better taught:
Follies and faults elsewhere by them are shown,
But by your manners they correct their own.
The' illiterate writer, emp'ric-like, applies
To minds diseas'd, unsafe, chance remedies:
The learn'd in schools, where knowledge first began.
Studies with care the' anatomy of man;
Sees virtue, vice, and passions in their cause,
And fame from science, not from fortune, draws.
So poetry, which is in Oxford made
An art, in London only is a trade.
There haughty dunces, whose unlearned pen
Could ne'er spell grammar, would be reading men.
Such build their poems the Lucretian way;
So many huddled atoms make a play;
And if they hit in order by some chance,
They call that Nature which is Ignorance.
To such a fame let mere Town-wits aspire,
And their gay nonsense their own Cits admire.
Our poet, could he find forgiveness here,
Would wish it rather than a plaudit there.

He owns no crown from those Prætorian bands,
But knows that right is in the senate's hands;
Not impudent enough to hope your praise,
Low at the Muses' feet his wreath he lays,
And, where he took it up, resigns his bays.
Kings make their poets whom themselves think fit,
But 'tis your suffrage makes authentic wit.

TO THE

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

Discord and plots, which have undone our age,
With the same ruin have o'erwhelm'd the stage.
Our house has suffer'd in the common woe,
We have been troubled with Scotch rebels too.
Our brethren are from Thames to Tweed depart-
And, of our sisters, all the kinder-hearted, [ed,
To Edinborough gone, or coach'd, or carted:
With Bonny Bluecap there they act all night
For Scotch half-crown, in English threepence hight.
One nymph, to whom fat Sir John Falstaff's lean,
There, with a single person, fills the scene:
Another, with long use and age decay'd,
Div'd here—old woman, and rose there—a maid.
Our trusty door-keepers of former time
There strut and swagger in heroic rhyme.
Tack but a copper lace to drugget suit,
And there's a hero made without dispute;
And that which was a capon's tail before,
Becomes a plume for Indian emperor.
But all his subjects, to express the care
Of imitation, go, like Indians, bare:

Lac'd linen there would be a dangerous thing;
It might, perhaps, a new rebellion bring;
The Scot who wore it would be chosen king.
But why should I these renegades describe,
When you yourselves have been a lewder tribe?
Teague has been here, and, to this learned pit,
With Irish action, slander'd English wit;
You have beheld such barbarous Macs appear,
As merited a second massacre;
Such as, like Cain, were branded with disgrace,
And had their country stamp'd upon their face.
When strollers durst presume to pick your purse,
We humbly thought our broken troop not worse.
How ill soe'er our action may deserve,
Oxford's a place where Wit can never starve.

TO THE

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

Though actors cannot much of learning boast,
Of all who want it we admire it most;
We love the praises of a learned pit,
As we remotely are allied to Wit.
We speak our poet's wit, and trade in ore,
Like those who touch upon the golden shore;
Betwixt our judges can distinction make,
Discern how much, and why, our poems take;
Mark if the fools, or men of sense, rejoice;
Whether the' applause be only sound or voice.
When our fop-gallants, or our City-folly,
Clap over-loud, it makes us melancholy:

We doubt that scene which does their wonder raise,
And, for their ignorance, contemn their praise.
Judge then if we who act, and they who write,
Should not be proud of giving you delight.
London likes grossly; but this nicer pit
Examines, fathoms all the depths of wit;
The ready finger lays on every blot,
Knows what should justly please, and what should not;
Nature herself lies open to your view,
You judge by her what draught of her is true,
Where outlines false, and colours seem too faint,
Where bunglers daub, and where true poets paint.
But, by the sacred genius of this place,
By every Muse, by each domestic Grace,
Be kind to Wit, which but endeavours well,
And, where you judge, presumes not to excel.
Our poets thither for adoption come,
As nations sued to be made free of Rome;
Not in the suffragating tribes to stand,
But in your utmost, last, provincial band.
If his ambition may those hopes pursue,
Who, with religion, loves your arts and you,
Oxford to him a dearer name shall be
Than his own mother-university.
Thebes did his green, unknowing youth engage;
He chooses Athens in his riper age.

TO

THE DISAPPOINTMENT:

OR, THE MOTHER IN FASHION.

BY SOUTHERN, 1684.

SPOKEN BY MR. BETTERTON.

How comes it, Gentlemen, that now-a-days,
When all of you so shrewdly judge of plays,
Our poets tax you still with want of sense,
All prologues treat you at your own expense?
Sharp citizens a wiser way can go;
They make you fools, but never call you so:
They, in good manners, seldom make a slip,
But treat a common whore with—Ladyship:
But here each saucy wit at random writes,
And uses ladies as he uses knights.
Our Author, young, and grateful in his nature,
Vows that from him no nymph deserves a satire:
Nor will he ever draw—I mean his rhyme—
Against the sweet partaker of his crime.
Nor is he yet so bold an undertaker
To call men fools:—'tis railing at their Maker.
Besides, he fears to split upon that shelf;
He's young enough to be a fop himself;
And if his praise can bring you all a-bed,
He swears such hopeful youth no nation ever bred.
Your nurses, we presume, in such a case
Your father chose, because he lik'd the face,
And often they supplied your mother's place.
The dry-nurse was your mother's ancient maid,
Who knew some former slip she ne'er betray'd.

Betwixt them both, for milk and sugar-candy,
Your sucking bottles were well stor'd with brandy.
Your father, to initiate your discourse,
Meant to have taught you first to swear and curse,
But was prevented by each careful nurse.
For, leaving Dad and Mam, as names too common,
They taught you certain parts of man and woman.
I pass your schools; for there, when first you came,
You would be sure to learn the Latin name.
In colleges you scorn'd the art of thinking,
But learn'd all moods and figures of good drinking:
Thence, come to Town, you practice play, to know
The virtues of the high dice and the low:
Each thinks himself a sharper most profound;
He cheats by pence, is cheated by the pound.
With these perfections, and what else he gleans,
The sparks set up for love behind our scenes,
Hot in pursuit of princesses and queens.
There, if they know their man, with cunning carriage,
Twenty to one but it concludes in marriage.
He hires some homely room, Love's fruits to gather,
And, garret-high, rebels against his father:
But he once dead———
Brings her in triumph, with her portion down,
A toilet, dressing-box, and half-a-crown.
Some marry first, and then they fall to scouring,
Which is refining marriage into whoring.
Our women batten well on their good nature,
All they can rap and rend for the dear creature;
But while abroad so liberal the dolt is,
Poor spouse at home as ragged as a colt is.
Last, some there are who take their first degrees
Of lewdness in our middle galleries;

The doughty bullies enter bloody drunk,
Invade and grubble one another's punk;
They caterwaul, and make a dismal rout,
Call sons of whores, and strike, but ne'er lug out:
Thus, while for paltry punk they roar and stickle,
They make it bawdier than a Conventicle.

TO THE

KING AND QUEEN,

UPON THE UNION OF THE TWO COMPANIES IN 1686.

Since Faction ebbs, and rogues grow out of fashion,
Their penny-scribes take care to' inform the nation
How well men thrive in this or that plantation:

How Pennsylvania air agrees with Quakers,
And Carolina's with Associators:
Both e'en too good for madmen and for traitors.

Truth is, our land with saints is so run o'er,
And every age produces such a store,
That now there's need of two New-Englands more.

What's this, you'll say, to us and our vocation?—
Only thus much; that we have left our station,
And made this Theatre our new Plantation.

The factious natives never could agree,
But aiming, as they call'd it, to be free,
Those playhouse-whigs set up for property.

Some say, they no obedience paid of late,
But would new fears and jealousies create,
Till topsy-turvy they had turn'd the state.

Plain sense, without the talent of foretelling,
Might guess 'twould end in downright knocks and quelling;
For seldom comes there better—of rebelling.

When men will, needlessly, their freedom barter
For lawless power, sometimes they catch a Tartar;
There's a damn'd word that rhymes to this, call'd Charter.

But, since the victory with us remains,
You shall be call'd to twelve in all our gains,
If you'll not think us saucy for our pains.

Old men shall have good old plays to delight 'em;
And you, fair ladies and gallants, that slight 'em,
We'll treat with good new plays; if our new wits can write 'em.

We'll take no blundering verse, no fustian tumor,
No dribbling love from this or that presumer;
No dull fat fool, shamm'd on the stage for humour.

For, faith, some of them such vile stuff have made,
As none but fools or fairies ever play'd;
But 'twas, as shopmen say, to force a trade.

We've given you tragedies all sense defying,
And singing men, in woful metre dying:—
Thus 'tis when heavy lubbers will be flying.

All these disasters we will hope to weather;
We bring you none of our old lumber hither;
Whig-poets and Whig-sheriffs may hang together.

TO

THE PRINCESS OF CLEVES.

BY N. LEE, 1689.

Ladies! (I hope there's none behind to hear)
I long to whisper something in your ear;
A secret which does much my mind perplex;—
There's treason in the play against our sex:
A man that's false to love, that vows and cheats,
And kisses every living thing he meets;
A rogue in mode, (I dare not speak too broad,)
One that does something to the very bawd.
Out on him, traitor, for a filthy beast;
Nay, and he's like the pack of all the rest:
None of them stick at mark; they all deceive;
Some Jew has chang'd the text, I half believe;
Their Adam cozen'd our poor grandame Eve.
To hide their faults, they rap out oaths, and tear:
Now, though we lie, we're too well-bred to swear,
So we compound for half the sin we owe,
But men are dipt for soul and body too;
And when found out, excuse themselves, pox cant
With Latin stuff, *perjuria ridet amantum.* ['em,
I'm not book-learn'd, to know that word in vogue,
But I suspect 'tis Latin for—a rogue.
I'm sure I never heard that screech-owl hollow'd
In my poor ears, but separation follow'd.

How can such perjur'd villains e'er be saved?
Achitophel's not half so false to David;
With vows and soft expressions to allure,
They stand, like foreman of a shop, demure:
No sooner out of sight but they are gadding,
And for the next new face ride out a-padding.
Yet, by their favour, when they have been kissing,
We can perceive the ready money missing.
Well! we may rail; but 'tis as good ev'n wink;
Something we find, and something they will sink:
But since they're at renouncing, 'tis our parts
To trump their diamonds, as they trump our hearts.

TO

THE WIDOW RANTER.

BY MRS. BEHN, 1690.

Heaven save ye, Gallants, and this hopeful age,
You're welcome to the downfal of the stage:
The fools have labour'd long in their vocation;
And vice (the manufacture of the nation)
O'erstocks the Town so much, and thrives so well,
That fops and knaves grow drugs, and will not sell.
In vain our wares on theatres are shown,
When each has a plantation of his own.
His cause ne'er fails; for whatsoe'er he spends,
There's still God's plenty for himself and friends.
Should men be rated by poetic rules,
Lord! what a poll would there be rais'd from fools!
Mean time, poor Wit prohibited must lie,
As if 'twere made some French commodity.

Fools you will have, and rais'd at vast expense,
And yet, as soon as seen, they give offence.
Time was when none would cry, 'That oaf was me?'
But now you strive about your pedigree.
Bauble and cap no sooner are thrown down,
But there's a miss of more than half the Town:
Each one will challenge a child's part at least;
A sign the family is well increas'd.
Of foreign cattle there's no longer need,
When we're supplied so fast with English breed.
Well! flourish, Countrymen; drink, swear, and roar,
Let every free-born subject keep his whore,
And wandering in the wilderness about,
At end of forty years not wear her out.
But when you see these pictures, let none dare
To own beyond a limb or single share;
For where the punk is common, he's a sot
Who needs will father what the parish got.

TO

ARVIRAGUS AND PHILICIA.

REVIVED BY LODOWIC CARLELL, ESQ. SPOKEN BY MR. HART.

With sickly actors, and an old house too,
We're match'd with glorious theatres and new;
And with our ale-house scenes, and clothes bare worn,
Can neither raise old plays, nor new adorn,
If all these ills could not undo us quite,
A brisk French troop is grown your dear delight;

Who with broad bloody bills call you each day,
To laugh, and break your buttons at their play:
Or see some serious piece, which we presume
Is fallen from some incomparable plume;
And therefore, *Messieurs*, if you'll do us grace,
Send lackeys early, to preserve your place.
We dare not on your privilege intrench,
Or ask you why you like them; they are French.
Therefore, some go with courtesy exceeding,
Neither to hear nor see, but show their breeding;
Each lady striving to out-laugh the rest,
To make it seem they understood the jest.
Their countrymen come in, and nothing pay;
To teach us English were to clap the play:
Civil, i' gad! our hospitable land
Bears all the charge, for them to understand;
Mean time we languish and neglected lie,
Like wives, while you keep better company;
And wish for your own sakes, without a satire,
You'd less good breeding, or had more good nature.

TO

THE PROPHETESS.

BY BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER. REVIVED BY DRYDEN.
SPOKEN BY MR. BETTERTON.

What Nostradame, with all his art can guess,
The fate of our approaching Prophetess?
A play which, like a perspective set right,
Presents our vast expenses close to sight;
But turn the tube, and there we sadly view
Our distant gains, and those uncertain too:

A sweeping tax, which on ourselves we raise,
And all like you, in hopes of better days.
When will our losses warn us to be wise?
Our wealth decreases, and our charges rise.
Money, the sweet allurer of our hopes,
Ebbs out in oceans, and comes in by drops.
We raise new objects to provoke delight;
But you grow sated ere the second sight.
False men! e'en so you serve your mistresses;
They rise three stories in their towering dresses,
And, after all, you love not long enough
To pay the rigging, ere you leave them off.
Never content with what you had before,
But true to change, and Englishmen all o'er.
Now honour calls you hence; and all your care
Is to provide the horrid pomp of war.
In plume and scarf, jack-boots, and Bilbo-blade,
Your silver goes, that should support our trade.
Go, unkind heroes, leave our stage to mourn,
Till rich from vanquish'd rebels you return,
And the fat spoils of Teague in triumph draw,
His firkin butter, and his usquebaugh.
Go, conquerors of your male and female foes,
Men without hearts, and women without hose.
Each bring his love, a Bogland captive, home;
Such proper pages will long trains become;
With copper collars, and with brawny backs,
Quite to put down the fashion of our blacks.
Then shall the pious Muses pay their vows,
And furnish all their laurels for your brows;
Their tuneful voice shall raise for your delights;
We want not poets fit to sing your flights.
But you, bright Beauties, for whose only sake
Those doughty knights such dangers undertake,

When they with happy gales are gone away,
With your propitious presence bless our play,
And with a sigh their empty seats survey;
Then think—on that bare bench my servant sat;
I see him ogle still, and hear him chat;
Selling facetious bargains, and propounding
That witty recreation, call'd Dumb-founding.
Their loss with patience we will try to bear,
And would do more to see you often here,
That our dead stage, reviv'd, by your fair eyes,
Under a female regency may rise.

TO

THE MISTAKES.

BY JOSEPH HARRIS, COMEDIAN, 1690.

ENTER MR. BRIGHT.

Gentlemen, we must beg your pardon; here's no Prologue to be had to-day; our new play is like to come on without a frontispiece; as bald as one of you young beaux, without your periwig. I left our young poet snivelling and sobbing behind the scenes, and cursing somebody that has deceived him.

ENTER MR. BOWEN.

Hold your prating to the audience; here is honest Mr. Williams, just come in, half mellow, from the Rose Tavern. He swears he is inspired with claret, and will come on, and that extempore too, either with a prologue of his own, or something

like one. O, here he comes to his trial, at all adventures. For my part, I wish him a good deliverance.

[*Exeunt Mr. Bright and Mr. Bowen.*

ENTER MR. WILLIAMS.

Save ye, Sirs, save ye? I am in a hopeful way,
I should speak something, in rhyme, now, for the play:
But the deuce take me, if I know what to say.
I'll stick to my friend the author, that I can tell ye,
To the last drop of claret in my belly.
So far I'm sure 'tis rhyme—that needs no granting;
And if my verses' feet stumble—you see my own are wanting.
Our young poet has brought a piece of work,
In which though much of art there does not lurk,
It may hold out three days—and that's as long as Cork.
But for this—play (which, till I have done we show not)
What may be its fortune—by the Lord—I know not.
This I dare swear, no malice here is writ;
'Tis innocent of all things—even of wit.
He's no high-flyer—he makes no sky-rockets;
His squibs are only levell'd at your pockets:
And if his crackers light among your pelf,
You are blown up; if not, then he's blown up himself.
By this time, I'm something recover'd of my fluster'd madness;
And now a word or two in sober sadness.
Ours is a common play; and you pay down
A common harlot's price—just half-a-crown.

You'll say, I play the pimp on my friend's score;
But since 'tis for a friend, your gibes give o'er;
For many a mother has done that before.
How's this? you cry, an actor write?—we know it;
But Shakspeare was an actor, and a poet.
Has not great Jonson's learning often fail'd?
But Shakspeare's greater genius still prevail'd.
Have not some writing actors, in this age,
Deserv'd and found success upon the stage?
To tell the truth, when our old wits are tir'd,
Not one of us but means to be inspir'd.
Let your kind presence grace our homely cheer;
Peace and the butt is all our business here:
So much for that;—and the devil take small beer.

PROLOGUE.

Gallants, a bashful poet bids me say,
He's come to lose his maidenhead to-day.
Be not too fierce, for he's but green of age,
And ne'er, till now, debauch'd upon the stage.
He wants the suffering part of resolution,
And comes with blushes to his execution.
Ere you deflower his Muse, he hopes the pit
Will make some settlement upon his wit.
Promise him well, before the play begin,
For he would fain be cozen'd into sin.
'Tis not but that he knows you mean to fail;
But, if you leave him after being frail,
He'll have, at least, a fair pretence to rail;
To call you base, and swear you us'd him ill,
And put you in the new Deserters' bill.
Lord, what a troop of perjur'd men we see,
Enow to fill another Mercury!

But this the ladies may with patience brook;
Theirs are not the first colours you forsook.
He would be loth the beauties to offend,
But, if he should, he's not too old to mend.
He's a young plant, in his first year of bearing,
But his friend swears—he will be worth the rearing.
His gloss is still upon him; though 'tis true
He's yet unripe, yet take him for the blue.
You think an apricot half green is best;
There's sweet and sour, and one side good at least.
Mangos and limes, whose nourishment is little,
Though not for food, are yet preserv'd for pickle;
So this green writer may pretend, at least,
To whet your stomachs for a better feast.
He makes this difference in the sexes too;
He sells to men, he gives himself to you.
To both he would contribute some delight,
A mere poetical hermaphrodite.
Thus he's equip'd, both to be woo'd and woo,
With arms offensive, and defensive too;
'Tis hard, he thinks, if neither part will do,

TO

ALBUMAZAR.

To say this comedy pleas'd long ago,
Is not enough to make it pass you now;
Yet, Gentlemen, your ancestors had wit,
When few men censur'd, and when fewer writ:
And Jonson, of those few the best, chose this,
As the best model of his master-piece.
Subtle was got by our Albumazar,
That alchymist by this astrologer;

Here he was fashion'd, and we may suppose
He lik'd the fashion well who wore the clothes.
But Ben made nobly his what he did mould;
What was another's lead becomes his gold:
Like an unrighteous conqueror he reigns,
Yet rules that well which he unjustly gains.
But this our age such authors does afford,
As make whole plays, and yet scarce write one word;
Who, in this anarchy of wit, rob all,
And what's their plunder, their possession call:
Who, like old padders, scorn by night to prey,
But rob by sunshine, in the face of day:
Nay, scarce the common ceremony use
Of 'Stand, Sir, and deliver up your muse;'
But knock the poet down, and, with a grace,
Mount Pegasus before the owner's face.
Faith, if you have such country Toms abroad,
'Tis time for all true men to leave that road:
Yet it were modest, could it but be said
They strip the living, but these rob the dead;
Dare with the mummies of the Muses play,
And make love to them the Egyptian way;
Or, as a rhyming author would have said,
Join the dead living to the living dead.
Such men in poetry may claim some part,
They have the licence, though they want the art;
And might, where theft is prais'd, for laureats stand,
Poets, not of the head, but of the hand:
They make the benefits of other's studying,
Much like the meals of politic Jack-pudding,
Whose dish to challenge no man has the courage;
'Tis all his own, when once he has spit i' the' porridge,
But, Gentlemen, you're all concern'd in this,
You are in fault for what they do amiss;

For they their thefts still undiscover'd think,
And durst not steal, unless you pleas'd to wink.
Perhaps you may award, by your decree,
They should refund; but that can never be;
For should you letters of reprisal seal,
These men write that which no man else would steal.

TO

THE PILGRIM.

BY BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER. REVIVED FOR OUR AUTHOR'S BENEFIT, 1700.

How wretched is the fate of those who write!
Brought muzzled to the stage, for fear they bite;
Where, like Tom Dove, they stand the common foe,
Lugg'd by the critic, baited by the beau.
Yet worse, their brother-poets damn the play,
And roar the loudest, though they never pay.
The fops are proud of scandal, for they cry,
At every lewd, low character—'That's I.'
He who writes letters to himself, would swear
The world forgot him if he was not there.
What should a poet do? 'tis hard for one
To pleasure all the fools that would be shown;
And yet not two in ten will pass the Town.
Most coxcombs are not of the laughing kind;
More goes to make a fop than fops can find.
Quack Maurus,* though he never took degrees
In either of our Universities,
Yet to be shown by some kind wit he looks,
Because he play'd the fool, and writ three books;

* Sir Richard Blackmore; who first stole Dryden's plan of an epic poem, and then traduced the author, by way of acknowledging the obligation.

But if he would be worth a poet's pen,
He must be more a fool, and write again;
For all the former fustian stuff he wrote
Was dead-born doggrel, or is quite forgot.
His Man of Uz, stript of his Hebrew robe,
Is just the proverb, and 'as poor as Job!'
One would have thought he could no longer jog;
But Arthur was a level, Job's a bog:
There, though he crept, yet still he kept in sight;
But here he founders in, and sinks downright.
Had he prepar'd us, and been dull by rule,
Tobit had first been turn'd to ridicule;
But our bold Briton, without fear or awe,
O'erleaps at once the whole Apocrypha,
Invades the Psalms with rhymes, and leaves no room
For any Vandal-Hopkins yet to come.

But when, if, after all, this godly geer
Is not so senseless as it would appear;
Our mountebank has laid a deeper train,
His cant, like Merry-Andrew's noble vein,
Cat-calls the sects to draw them in again.
As leisure hours in epic song he deals,
Writes to the rumbling of his coach's wheels;
Prescribes in haste, and seldom kills by rule,
But rides triumphant between stool and stool.

Well, let him go; 'tis yet too early day
To get himself a place in farce or play.
We know not by what name we should arraign him,
For no one category can contain him;
A pedant, canting preacher, and a quack,
Are load enough to break one ass's back:
At last grown wanton, he presum'd to write,
Traduc'd two kings, their kindness to requite;
One made the doctor, and one dubb'd the knight.

FOR THE WOMEN,

WHEN THEY ACTED AT THE OLD THEATRE IN LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

Were none of you, Gallants, e'er driv'n so hard,
As when the poor kind soul was under guard,
And could not do't at home, in some by-street
To take a lodging, and in private meet?
Such is our case; we can't appoint our house
The lover's old and wonted rendezvous,
But hither to this trusty nook remove;
The worse the lodging is, the more the love:
For much good pastime, many a dear sweet hug,
Is stol'n in garrets, on the humble rug.
Here's good accommodation in the pit;
The grave demurely in the midst may sit,
And so the hot Burgundian on the side
Ply vizard mask, and o'er the benches stride:
Here are convenient upper boxes, too,
For those that make the most triumphant show;
All that keep coaches must not sit below.
There, Gallants, you betwixt the acts retire,
And at dull plays have something to admire;
We, who look up, can your addresses mark.
And see the creatures coupled in the ark:
So we expect the lovers, braves, and wits,
The gaudy house with scenes will serve for cits.

EPILOGUES.

SPOKEN AT THE

OPENING OF THE NEW HOUSE,

MARCH 26, 1674.

THOUGH what our prologue said was sadly true,
Yet, Gentlemen, our homely house is new;
A charm that seldom fails with wicked you.
A country lip may have the velvet touch;
Though she's no lady, you may think her such:
A strong imagination may do much.
But you, loud Sirs, who through your curls look big,
Critics in plume and white Vallancy-wig,
Who lolling on our foremost benches sit,
And still charge first, the true forlorn of wit;
Whose favours, like the sun, warm where you roll,
Yet you, like him, have neither heat nor soul;
So may your hats your foretops never press,
Untouch'd your ribbons, sacred be your dress;
So may you slowly to old age advance,
And have the' excuse of youth for ignorance;
So may Fop-corner full of noise remain,
And drive far off the dull attentive train;
So may your midnight-scourings happy prove,
And morning batteries force your way to love;

So may not France your warlike hands recall,
But leave you by each others' swords to fall;
As you come here to ruffle vizard punk,
When sober rail, and roar when you are drunk.
But to the wits we can some merit plead,
And urge what by themselves has oft been said:
Our house relieves the ladies from the frights
Of ill-paved streets, and long dark winter nights;
The Flanders-horses from a cold bleak road,
Where bears in furs dare scarcely look abroad:
The audience from worn plays and fustian stuff
Of rhyme, more nauseous than three boys in buff.
Though in their house the poets' heads appear,
We hope we may presume their wits are here.
The best which they reserv'd they now will play;
For, like kind cuckolds, though we' have not the way
To please, we'll find you abler men who may.
If they should fail, for last recruits we breed
A troop of frisking Monsieurs to succeed;
You know the French sure cards, in time of need.

INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN SPOKEN BY

THE LADY HEN. MAR. WENTWORTH.

WHEN CALISTO WAS ACTED AT COURT.

As Jupiter I made my court in vain,
I'll now assume my native shape again:
I'm weary to be so unkindly us'd,
And would not be a god to be refus'd.

State grows uneasy when it hinders love;
A glorious burden, which the wise remove.
Now as a nymph I need not sue, nor try
The force of any lightning but the eye.
Beauty and youth more than a god command;
No Jove could e'er the force of these withstand.
'Tis here that sovereign power admits dispute;
Beauty sometimes is justly absolute.
Our sullen Catos, whatsoe'er they say,
Ev'n while they frown and dictate laws, obey.
You, mighty Sir, our bonds may easy make,
And gracefully, what all must suffer, take:
Above those forms the grave affect to wear;
For 'tis not to be wise to be severe.
True wisdom may some gallantry admit,
And soften business with the charms of wit.
These peaceful triumphs with your cares you bought,
And from the midst of fighting nations brought.
You only hear it thunder from afar,
And sit, in peace—the arbiter of war:
Peace, the loath'd manna which hot brains despise.
You knew its worth, and made it early prize;
And, in its happy leisure, sit and see
The promises of more felicity:
Two glorious nymphs of your own godlike line,
Whose morning-rays like noontide strike and shine,
Whom you to suppliant monarchs shall dispose,
To bind your friends, and to disarm your foes.

TO

THE MAN OF MODE:

OR, SIR FOPLING FLUTTER.

BY SIR GEORGE ETHEREGE, 1676.

Most modern wits such monstrous fools have shown,
They seem not of Heaven's making, but their own.
Those nauseous harlequins in farce may pass,
But there goes more to a substantial ass:
Something of man must be expos'd to view,
That, Gallants, they may more resemble you.
Sir Fopling is a fool so nicely writ,
The ladies would mistake him for a wit;
And, when he sings, talks loud, and cocks, would
'I vow, methinks he's pretty company: [cry—
So brisk, so gay, so travell'd, so refin'd,
As he took pains to graft upon his kind.'
True fops help Nature's work, and go to school
To file and finish God Almighty's fool.
Yet none Sir Fopling him, or him can call;
He's knight o' the' shire, and represents you all,
From each he meets he culls whate'er he can;
Legion's his name, a people in a man.
His bulky folly gathers as it goes.
And, rolling o'er you, like a snow-ball grows.
His various modes from various fathers follow;
One taught the toss, and one the new French wallow.
His sword-knot this, his cravat that design'd;
And this, the yard-long snake he twirls behind.
From one the sacred periwig he gain'd,
Which wind ne'er blew, nor touch of hat profan'd.

Another's diving bow he did adore,
Which, with a shog, casts all the hair before,
Till he with full decorum brings it back,
And rises with a water-spaniel shake.
As for his songs, the ladies' dear delight,
These, sure, he took from most of you who write.
Yet every man is safe from what he fear'd;
For no one fool is hunted from the herd.

TO

MITHRIDATES, KING OF PONTUS.

BY N. LEE, 1678.

You've seen a pair of faithful lovers die;
And much you care; for most of you will cry,
'Twas a just judgment on their constancy.'
For, Heaven be thank'd, we live in such an age,
When no man dies for love, but on the stage:
And e'en those martyrs are but rare in plays;
A cursed sign how much true faith decays.
Love is no more a violent desire;
'Tis a mere metaphor, a painted fire.
In all our sex, the name examin'd well,
'Tis pride to gain, and vanity to tell.
In woman 'tis of subtle interest made:
Curse on the punk that made it first a trade!
She first did Wit's prerogative remove,
And made a fool presume to prate of love.
Let honour and preferment go for gold,
But glorious beauty is not to be sold;

Or, if it be, 'tis at a rate so high,
That nothing but adoring it should buy.
Yet the rich cullies may their boasting spare;
They purchase but sophisticated ware.
'Tis prodigality that buys deceit,
Where both the giver and the taker cheat.
Men but refine on the old half-crown way,
And women fight, like Switsers, for their pay.

TO

A TRAGEDY CALLED TAMERLANE.

BY MR. SAUNDERS.

Ladies, the beardless author of this day
Commends to you the fortune of his play:
A woman-wit has often grac'd the stage,
But he's the first boy-poet of our age.
Early as is the year his fancies blow,
Like young Narcissus, peeping through the snow.
Thus Cowley blossom'd soon, yet flourish'd long;
This is as forward, and may prove as strong.
Youth with the fair should always favour find,
Or we are damn'd dissemblers of our kind.
What's all this love they put into our parts?
'Tis but the pit-a-pat of two young hearts.
Should Hag and Greybeard make such tender moan,
Faith you'd e'en trust 'em to themselves alone,
And cry, 'Let's go, here's nothing to be done.'
Since love's our business, as 'tis your delight,
The young, who best can practise, best can write.

What though he be not come to his full power,
He's mending and improving every hour.
You sly she-jockeys of the box and pit,
Are pleas'd to find a hot unbroken wit:
By management he may in time be made;
But there's no hopes of an old batter'd jade;
Faint and unnerv'd he runs into a sweat,
And always fails you at the second heat.

FOR THE KING'S HOUSE.

We act by fits and starts, like drowning men,
But just peep up, and then pop down again.
Let those who call us wicked change their sense;
For never men liv'd more on Providence.
Not lottery cavaliers are half so poor,
Nor broken Cits, nor a vacation-whore.
Not courts, nor courtiers living on the rents
Of the three last ungiving Parliaments:
So wretched, that if Pharoah could divine,
He might have spar'd his dream of seven lean kine,
And chang'd his vision for the Muses Nine.
The comet that, they say, portends a dearth,
Was but a vapour drawn from playhouse-earth;
Pent there since our last fire, and (Lilly says)
Foreshows our change of state, and thin third-days.
'Tis not our want of wit that keeps us poor,
For then the printers' press would suffer more.
Their pamphletecrs each day their venom spit;
They thrive by treason, and we starve by wit.
Confess the truth; which of you has not laid
Four farthings out to buy the Hatfield Maid?

Or, which is duller yet, and more would spite us,
Democritus' Wars with Heraclitus?
Such are the authors who have run us down,
And exercis'd you critics of the Town.
Yet these are pearls to your lampooning rhymes;
Ye' abuse yourselves more dully than the times.
Scandal, the glory of the English nation,
Is worn to rags, and scribbled out of fashion.
Such harmless thrusts, as if, like fencers wise,
They had agreed their play before their prize.
Faith they may hang their harps upon the willows;
'Tis just like children, when they box with pillows.
Then put an end to civil wars for shame;
Let each knight-errant who has wrong'd a dame
Throw down his pen, and give her, as he can,
The satisfaction of a gentleman.

TO

THE LOYAL BROTHER:

OR, THE PERSIAN PRINCE.

1682.

A VIRGIN poet was serv'd up to-day,
Who, till this hour, ne'er cackled for a play.
He's neither yet a Whig nor Tory boy;
But, like a girl, whom several would enjoy,
Begs leave to make the best of his own natural toy.
Were I to play my callow author's game,
The King's House would instruct me by the name.
There's loyalty to one: I wish no more;
A commonwealth sounds like a common whore.

Let Husband or gallant be what they will,
One part of woman is true Tory still.
If any factious spirit should rebel,
Our sex, with ease, can every rising quell.
Then, as you hope we should your failings hide,
An honest jury for our play provide.
Whigs at their poets never take offence;
They save dull culprits who have murder'd sense.
Though nonsense is a nauseous heavy mass,
The vehicle called Faction makes it pass.
Faction in play's the Commonwealth-man's bribe,
The leaden farthing of the canting tribe:
Though void in payment laws and statutes make it,
The neighbourhood, that knows the man, will take it.
'Tis Faction buys the votes of half the pit;
Theirs is the pension-parliament of wit.
In city-clubs their venom let them vent;
For there 'tis safe in its own element.
Here, where their madness can have no pretence,
Let them forget themselves an hour of sense.
In one poor isle why should two factions be?
Small difference in your vices I can see:
In drink and drabs both sides too well agree.
Would there were more preferments in the land:
If places fell, the party could not stand.
Of this damn'd grievance every Whig complains;
They grunt like hogs, till they have got their grains.
Mean time, you see what trade our plots advance;
We send each year good money into France;
And they that know what merchandise we need,
Send o'er true Protestants to mend our breed.

TO

THE DUKE OF GUISE.

1683.

SPOKEN BY MRS. COOKE.

Much time and trouble this poor play has cost;
And, faith, I doubted once the cause was lost.
Yet no one man was meant; nor great nor small;
Our poets, like frank gamesters, threw at all;
They took no single aim————
But, like bold boys, true to their prince and hearty,
Huzza'd, and fir'd broadsides at the whole party.
Duels are crimes: but when the cause is right,
In battle every man is bound to fight.
For what should hinder me to sell my skin
Dear as I could, if once my hand were in?
Se defendendo never was a sin.
'Tis a fine world, my masters, right or wrong,
The Whigs must talk, and Tories hold their tongue.
They must do all they can————
But we, forsooth, must bear a Christian mind;
And fight, like boys, with one hand tied behind.
Nay, and when one boy's down, 'twere wondrous nice
To cry 'box fair'—and give him time to rise.
When fortune favours, none but fools will dally:
Would any of you sparks, if Nan or Mally
Tipt you the' inviting wink, stand shall I, shall I?
A trimmer cried (that heard me tell the story)
'Fie, Mistress Cooke; faith, you're too rank a Tory.

Wish not whigs hang'd; but pity their hard cases;
You women love to see men make wry faces.'—
'Pray Sir, (said I) don't think me such a Jew:
I say no more—but give the devil his due.'
'Lenitives (says he) suit best with our condition.'—
'Jack Ketch (says I) 's an excellent physician.'
'I love no blood.'—'Nor I, Sir, as I breathe;
But hanging is a fine dry kind of death.'—
'We trimmers are for holding all things even.'
'Yes:—just like him that hung 'twixt hell and heaven.'—
'Have we not had men's lives enough already?'
'Yes sure—but you're for holding all things steady.'
Now, since the weight hangs all on our side, brother,
You trimmers should, to poise it, hang on t'other.
Damn'd neuters, in their middle way of steering,
Are neither fish, nor flesh, nor good red-herring:
Not Whigs nor Tories they; nor this, nor that;
Not birds, nor beasts; but just a kind of bat,
A twilight animal, true to neither cause,
With Tory wings, but Whiggish teeth and claws.

TO THE

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

SPOKEN BY MR. HART, AT THE ACTING OF 'THE SILENT WOMAN.'

No poor Dutch peasant, wing'd with all his fear,
Flies with more haste, when the French arms draw near,
Than we with our poetic train come down,
For refuge hither, from the' infected Town.
Heaven for our sins this summer has thought fit
To visit us with all the plagues of wit.
A French-troop first swept all things in its way;
But those hot Monsieurs were too quick to stay:
Yet, to our cost, in that short time, we find
They left their itch of novelty behind.
The' Italian Merry-Andrews took their place,
And quite debauch'd the stage with lewd grimace.
Instead of wit and humour, your delight
Was there to see two hobby-horses fight:
Stout Scaramoucha with rush-lance rode in,
And ran a-tilt at Centaur-Harlequin.
For love, you heard how amorous asses bray'd,
And cats in gutters gave their serenade.
Nature was out of countenance, and each day
Some new-born monster shown you for a play:
But when all fail'd, to strike the stage quite dumb,
Those wicked engines, call'd Machines, are come,
Thunder and lightning now for wit are play'd,
And, shortly, scenes in Lapland will be laid:

Art-magic is for poetry profest;
And cats and dogs, and each obscener beast,
To which Egyptian dotards once did bow,
Upon our English stage are worshipp'd now.
Witchcraft reigns there, and raises to renown
Macbeth, and Simon Magus of the Town;
Fletcher's despis'd, your Jonson's out of fashion,
And wit—the only drug in all the nation.
In this low ebb our wares to you are shown;
By you those staple authors' worth is known;
For wit's a manufacture of your own.
When you, who only can, their scenes have prais'd,
We'll boldly back, and say—their price is rais'd.

SPOKEN AT OXFORD.

BY MRS. MARSHALL.

Oft has our poet wish'd—this happy seat
Might prove his fading Muse's last retreat!
I wonder'd at his wish;—but now I find
He sought for quiet, and content of mind,
Which noiseful towns and courts can never know,
And only in the shades, like laurels, grow.
Youth, ere it sees the world, here studies rest,
And Age, returning thence, concludes it best.
What wonder if we court that happiness
Yearly to share, which hourly you possess;
Teaching e'en you, (while the vext world we show)
Your peace to value more, and better know?
'Tis all we can return for favours past,
Whose holy memory shall ever last;

For patronage from him whose care presides
O'er every noble art, and every science guides:
Bathurst! a name the learn'd with reverence know,
And scarcely more to his own Virgil owe;
Whose age enjoys but what his youth deserv'd,
To rule those Muses whom before he serv'd.
His learning, and untainted manners too,
We find, Athenians, are deriv'd to you:
Such ancient hospitality there rests
In yours, as dwelt in the first Grecian breasts,
Whose kindness was religion to their guests.
Such modesty did to our sex appear,
As, had there been no laws, we need not fear,
Since each of you was our protector here:
Converse so chaste, and so strict virtue shown,
As might Apollo with the Muses own.
Till our return we must despair to find
Judges so just, so knowing, and so kind.

TO

CONSTANTINE THE GREAT.

BY N. LEE, 1683.

Our hero's happy in the play's conclusion;
The holy rogue at last has met confusion:
Though Arius all along appear'd a saint,
The last act show'd him a true Protestant.
Eusebius (for you know I read Greek authors)
Reports, that after all these plots and slaughters,
The court of Constantine was full of glory,
And every Trimmer turn'd addressing Tory.

They follow'd him in herds as they were mad:
When Clause was king, then all the world was glad.
Whigs kept the places they possest before,
And most were in a way of getting more;
Which was as much as saying, 'Gentlemen,
Here's power and money to be rogues again.'
Indeed, there were a sort of peaking tools;
Some call them modest, but I call them fools,
Men much more loyal, though not half so loud;
But these poor devils were cast behind the crowd:
For bold knaves thrive without one grain of sense,
But good men starve for want of impudence.
Besides all these, there were a sort of wights,
(I think my author calls them Tekelites)
Such hearty rogues against the king and laws,
They favour'd e'en a foreign rebel's cause: [aw'd,
When their own damn'd design was quash'd and
At least, they gave it their good word abroad:
As many a man who, for a quiet life,
Breeds out his bastard, not to noise his wife.
Thus o'er their darling plot these Trimmers cry,
And though they cannot keep it in their eye,
They bind it 'prentice to Count Tekely.
They believe not the last plot; may I be curst,
If I believe they e'er believ'd the first.
No wonder their own plot no plot they think;
The man, that makes it, never smells the stink.
And now it comes into my head, I'll tell
Why these damn'd Trimmers lov'd the Turks so
well.
The original Trimmer, though a friend to no man,
Yet in his heart ador'd a pretty woman;
He knew that Mahomet laid up for ever
Kind black-ey'd rogues for every true believer;

And, which was more than mortal men e'er tasted,
One pleasure that for threescore twelvemonths lasted:
To turn for this may surely be forgiven:
Who'd not be circumcis'd for such a heaven?

TO

THE KING AND QUEEN,

UPON THE UNION OF THE TWO COMPANIES, 1686.

New ministers, when first they get in place,
Must have a care to please; and that's our case:—
Some laws for public welfare we design,
If you, the power supreme, will please to join.
There are a sort of prattlers in the pit,
Who either have, or who pretend to wit:
These noisy Sirs so loud their parts rehearse,
That oft the play is silenc'd by the farce.
Let such be dumb, this penalty to shun,
Each to be thought my lady's eldest son.
But stay; methinks some vizard-mask I see
Cast out her lure from the mid gallery:
About her all the fluttering sparks are rang'd;
The noise continues, though the scene is chang'd:
Now growling, sputtering, wauling, such a clutter,
'Tis just like puss defendant in a gutter.
Fine love, no doubt; but ere two days are o'er ye,
The surgeon will be told a woful story.
Let Vizard-Mask her naked face expose,
On pain of being thought to want a nose.

Then for your lackeys, and your train beside,
By whate'er name or title dignified,
They roar so loud, you'd think behind the stairs
Tom Dove, and all the brotherhood of Bears:
They're grown a nuisance, beyond all disasters;
We've none so great, but their unpaying masters.
We beg you, Sirs, to beg your men, that they
Would please to give you leave to hear the play.
Next, in the playhouse spare your precious lives;
Think, like good Christians, on your bairns and wives:
Think on your souls; but, by your lugging forth,
It seems you know how little they are worth.
If none of these will move the warlike mind,
Think on the helpless whore you leave behind.
We beg you, last, our scene-room to forbear,
And leave our goods and chattels to our care.
Alas! our women are but washy toys,
And wholly taken up in stage-employs:
Poor willing tits they are; but yet, I doubt,
This double duty soon will wear them out.
Then you are watch'd besides with jealous care;
What if my Lady's page should find you there?
My Lady knows to' a tittle what there's in ye;
No passing your gilt shilling for a guinea.
Thus, Gentlemen, we have summ'd up in short
Our grievances, from country, town, and court,
Which humbly we submit to your good pleasure;
But first vote money, then redress at leisure.

TO THE

PRINCESS OF CLEVES.

1689.

A QUALM of conscience brings me back again,
To make amends to you bespatter'd men.
We women love like cats, that hide their joys
By growling, squalling, and a hideous noise.
I rail'd at wild young sparks; but, without lying,
Never was man worse thought on for high-flying.
The prodigal of love gives each her part,
And squandering shows, at least, a noble heart.
I've heard of men who, in some lewd lampoon,
Have hir'd a friend to make their valour known.
That accusation straight this question brings,
What is the man that does such naughty things?
The spaniel-lover, like a sneaking fop,
Lies at our feet: he's scarce worth taking up.
'Tis true, such heroes in a play go far;
But chamber-practice is not like the bar.
When men such vile, such faint petitions make,
We fear to give, because they fear to take.
Since modesty's the virtue of our kind,
Pray let it be to our own sex confin'd:
When men usurp it from the female nation,
'Tis but a work of supererogation—
We show'd a princess in the play, 'tis true,
Who gave her Cæsar more than all his due;
Told her own faults: but I should much abhor
To choose a husband for my confessor.

You see what fate follow'd the saint-like fool,
For telling tales from out the nuptial-school.
Our play a merry comedy had prov'd,
Had she confess'd so much to him she lov'd.
True Presbyterian-wives the means would try,
But damn'd confessing—is flat Popery.

TO HENRY II.

BY MR. MOUNTFORT, 1693. SPOKEN BY MRS. BRACEGIRDLE.

Thus you the sad castrophe have seen,
Occasion'd by a mistress and a queen.
Queen Eleanor the proud was French, they say;
But English manufacture got the day.
Jane Clifford was her name, as books aver;
Fair Rosamond was but her *nom de guerre*.
Now tell me, Gallants, would you lead your life
With such a mistress, or with such a wife?
If one must be your choice, which d'ye approve,
The curtain-lecture, or the curtain-love?
Would ye be godly with perpetual strife,
Still drudging on with homely Joan your wife:
Or take your pleasure in a wicked way,
Like honest whoring Harry in the play?
I guess your minds: the mistress would be taken,
And nauseous Matrimony sent a-packing,
The devil's in you all; mankind's a rogue;
You love the bride, but you detest the clog.
After a year, poor spouse is left i' the' lurch,
And you, like Haynes, return to mother-church,

Or, if the name of Church comes cross your mind,
Chapels of Ease behind our scenes you find.
The playhouse is a kind of market-place;
One chaffers for a voice, another for a face:
Nay, some of you, I dare not say how many,
Would buy of me a pen'worth for your penny.
E'en this poor face, which with my fan I hide,
Would make a shift my portion to provide,
With some small perquisites I have beside.
Though for your love, perhaps, I should not care,
I could not hate a man that bids me fair.
What might ensue 'tis hard for me to tell;
But I was drench'd to-day for loving well:
And fear the poison that would make me swell.

EPILOGUE.

You saw our wife was chaste, yet thoroughly tried,
And, without doubt, you're hugely edified;
For, like our hero, whom we show'd to-day,
You think no woman true, but in a play.
Love once did make a pretty kind of show;
Esteem and kindness in one breast would grow;
But 'twas—Heaven knows how many years ago.
Now some small chat, and guinea-expectation,
Gets all the pretty creatures in the nation.
In comedy your little selves you meet;
'Tis Covent-Garden drawn in Bridges-Street.
Smile on our author then, if he has shown
A jolly nut-brown bastard of your own.
Ah! happy you, with ease and with delight,
Who act those follies poets toil to write!

The sweating Muse does almost leave the chase;
She puffs, and hardly keeps your Protean vices pace.
Pinch you but in one vice, away you fly
To some new frisk of contrariety.
You roll like snow-balls, gathering as you run,
And get seven devils when dispossess'd of one.
Your Venus once was a Platonic queen;
Nothing of love beside the face was seen;
But every inch of her you now uncase,
And clap a vizard-mask upon the face.
For sins like these the zealous of the land,
With little hair and little or no band,
Declare how circulating pestilences
Watch, every twenty years, to snap offences.
Saturn e'en now takes doctoral degrees,
He'll do your work this summer without fees.
Let all the boxes, Phœbus, find thy grace,
And, ah! preserve the eighteen-penny place!
But for the pit-confounders, let them go,
And find as little mercy as they show:
The actors thus, and thus thy poets pray;
For every critic sav'd thou damn'st a play.

TO THE

HUSBAND HIS OWN CUCKOLD.

Like some raw sophister that mounts the pulpit,
So trembles a young poet at a full pit.
Unus'd to crowds, the parson quakes for fear,
And wonders how the devil he durst come there;
Wanting three talents needful for the place,
Some beard, some learning, and some little grace.

Nor is the puny Poet void of care;
For authors, such as our new authors are,
Have not much learning nor much wit to spare:
And as for grace, to tell the truth, there's scarce one
But has as little as the very Parson:
Both say they preach and write for your instruction:
But 'tis for a third-day, and for induction.
The difference is, that though you like the play,
The Poet's gain is ne'er beyond his day:
But with the Parson 'tis another case,
He, without holiness, may rise to grace.
The Poet has one disadvantage more,
That if his play be dull, he's damn'd all o'er,
Not only a damn'd blockhead, but damn'd poor.
But dulness well becomes the sable garment;
I warrant that ne'er spoil'd a Priest's preferment:
Wit's not his business, and as wit now goes,
Sirs, 'tis not so much yours as you suppose,
For you like nothing now—but nauseous beaux.
You laugh not, Gallants, as by proof appears,
At what his Beauship says, but what he wears;
So 'tis your eyes are tickled, not your ears.
The tailor and the furrier find the stuff,
The wit lies in the dress and monstrous muff.
The truth on't is, the payment of the pit
Is like for like, clipt money for clipt wit.
You cannot from our absent author hope
He should equip the stage with such a fop:
Fools change in England, and new fools arise;
For though the' immortal species never dies,
Yet every year new maggots make new flies.
But where he lives abroad, he scarce can find
One fool for millions that he left behind.

TO

THE PILGRIM.

Perhaps the parson* stretch'd a point too far,
When with our Theatres he wag'd a war.
He tells you that this very moral age
Receiv'd the first infection from the stage:
But, sure, a banish'd court, with lewdness fraught,
The seeds of open vice, returning, brought.
Thus lodg'd, (as vice by great example thrives)
It first debauch'd the daughters and the wives.
London, a fruitful soil, yet never bore
So plentiful a crop of horns before.
The poets, who must live by courts, or starve,
Were proud so good a government to serve;
And, mixing with buffoons and pimps profane,
Tainted the stage for some small snip of gain.
For they like harlots, under bawds profest,
Took all the' ungodly pains, and got the least.
Thus did the thriving malady prevail,
The court its head, the poets but the tail.
The sin was of our native growth, 'tis true;
The scandal of the sin was wholly new.
Misses they were, but modestly conceal'd;
Whitehall the naked Venus first reveal'd,
Who standing, as at Cyprus, in her shrine,
The strumpet was ador'd with rites divine.
Ere this, if saints had any secret motion,
'Twas chamber-practice all, and close devotion.

* Probably the Rev. Jeremy Collier; with whom Dryden had carried on an offensive and defensive paper-war.

I pass the peccadillos of their time;
Nothing but open lewdness was a crime.
A monarch's blood was venial to the nation,
Compar'd with one foul act of fornication.
Now they would silence us, and shut the door,
That let in all the bare-fac'd vice before.
As for reforming us, which some pretend,
That work in England is without an end:
Well may we change, but we shall never mend.
Yet if you can but bear the present stage,
We hope much better of the coming age.
What would you say, if we should first begin
To stop the trade of love behind the scene,
Where actresses make bold with married men?
For while abroad so prodigal the dolt is,
Poor spouse at home as ragged as a colt is.
In short we'll grow as moral as we can,
Save here and there a woman or a man:
But neither you nor we, with all our pains,
Can make clean work: there will be some remains,
While you have still your Oates, and we our Haynes.

SONGS.

THE FAIR STRANGER

Happy and free, securely blest,
No beauty could disturb my rest;
My amorous heart was in despair,
To find a new victorious fair:

Till you, descending on our plains,
With foreign force renew my chains;
Where now you rule without control,
The mighty sovereign of my soul.

Your smiles have more of conquering charms
Than all your native country arms:
Their troops we can expel with ease,
Who vanquish only when we please.

But in your eyes; oh! there's the spell;
Who can see them, and not rebel?
You make us captives by your stay,
Yet kill us if you go away.

ON THE YOUNG STATESMAN.

1680.

Clarendon had law and sense,
  Clifford was fierce and brave;
Bennet's grave look was a pretence,
And Danby's matchless impudence
  Help'd to support the knave.

But Sunderland, Godolphin, Lory,
These will appear such chits in story,
  'Twill turn all politics to jests,
To be repeated like John Dory,
  When fiddlers sing at feasts.

Protect us, mighty Providence!
  What would these madmen have?
First they would bribe us without pence,
Deceive us without common sense,
  And without power enslave.

Shall free-born men, in humble awe,
  Submit to servile shame,
Who from consent and custom draw
The same right to be rul'd by law,
  Which kings pretend to reign?

The Duke shall wield his conquering sword,
  The Chancellor make a speech,
The King shall pass his honest word,
The pawn'd revenue sums afford,
And then—Come kiss my breech.

So have I seen a king on chess
(His rooks and knights withdrawn,
His queen and bishops in distress)
Shifting about, grow less and less,
With here and there a pawn.

FOR ST. CECILIA'S DAY.

1687.

From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
This universal frame began:
When Nature underneath a heap
Of jarring atoms lay,
And could not heave her head,
The tuneful voice was heard from high,
'Arise, ye more than dead!'
Then cold and hot, and moist and dry,
In order to their stations leap,
And Music's power obey.
From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
This universal frame began:
From harmony to harmony,
Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
The diapason closing full in Man.

What passion cannot Music raise and quell!
When Jubal struck the chorded shell,
His listening brethren stood around,
And, wondering, on their faces fell,
To worship that celestial sound.

Less than a god they thought there could not dwell
Within the hollow of that shell,
That spoke so sweetly and so well.
What passion cannot Music raise and quell!

The Trumpets loud clangor
Excites us to arms;
With shrill notes of anger,
And mortal alarms;
The double, double, double beat
Of the thundering drum
Cries, Hark! the foe's come;
Charge, charge, 'tis too late to retreat.

The soft complaining Flute
In dying notes discovers
The woes of hopeless lovers,
Whose dirge is whisper'd by the warbling Lute.

Sharp violins proclaim
Their jealous pangs, and desperation,
Fury, frantic indignation,
Depth of pains, and height of passion,
For the fair, disdainful dame.

But, oh! what art can teach,
What human voice can reach,
The sacred Organ's praise?
Notes inspiring holy love,
Notes that wing their heavenly ways
To mend the choirs above.

Orpheus could lead the savage race,
And trees, uprooted, left their place,

Sequacious of the Lyre;
But bright Cecilia rais'd the wonder higher,
When to her Organ vocal breath was given;
An angel heard, and straight appear'd,
Mistaking earth for Heaven.

GRAND CHORUS.

As from the power of sacred lays
The spheres began to move,
And sung the great Creator's praise
To all the bless'd above;
So when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling pageant shall devour,
The trumpet shall be heard on high,
The dead shall live, the living die,
And Music shall attune the sky.

THE

TEARS OF AMYNTA,

FOR THE DEATH OF DAMON.

On a bank, beside a willow,
Heaven her covering, earth her pillow,
Sad Amynta sigh'd alone:
From the cheerless dawn of morning,
Till the dews of night returning,
Sighing, thus she made her moan:
'Hope is banish'd,
Joys are vanish'd,
Damon, my belov'd, is gone!

'Time, I dare thee to discover
Such a youth, and such a lover;
Oh! so true, so kind was he!
Damon was the pride of Nature,
Charming in his every feature;
Damon liv'd alone for me;
Melting kisses,
Murmuring blisses:
Who so liv'd and lov'd as we!

'Never shall we curse the morning,
Never bless the night returning,
Sweet embraces to restore:
Never shall we both lie dying,
Nature failing, love supplying
All the joys he drain'd before;
Death come end me
To befriend me;
Love and Damon are no more.'

SONG.

Sylvia the fair, in the bloom of fifteen,
Felt an innocent warmth as she lay on the green;
She had heard of a pleasure, and something she guest
By the towzing, and tumbling, and touching her breast:
She saw the men eager, but was at a loss
What they meant by their sighing, and kissing so close:

By their praying and whining,
And clasping and twining,
And panting and wishing,
And sighing and kissing,
And sighing and kissing so close.

'Ah!' she cried; 'ah, for a languishing maid,
In a country of Christians, to die without aid!
Not a Whig, or a Tory, or Trimmer at least,
Or a Protestant Parson, or a Catholic priest,
To instruct a young virgin that is at a loss
What they meant by their sighing and kissing so close:
By their praying and whining,
And clasping and twining,
And panting and wishing,
And sighing and kissing,
And sighing and kissing so close.'

Cupid, in shape of a swain did appear;
He saw the sad wound, and in pity drew near;
Then show'd her his arrow, and bid her not fear,
For the pain was no more than a maiden may bear:
When the balm was infus'd, she was not at a loss
What they meant by their sighing, and kissing so close:
By their praying and whining,
And clasping and twining,
And panting and wishing,
And sighing and kissing,
And sighing and kissing so close.

THE LADIES' SONG.

A choir of bright beauties in spring did appear,
To choose a May-lady to govern the year;
All the nymphs were in white, and the shepherds
in green;
The garland was given, and Phillis was queen:
But Phillis refus'd it, and sighing, did say,
'I'll not wear a garland while Pan is away.'

'While Pan and fair Syrinx are fled from our shore,
The Graces are banish'd, and Love is no more;
The soft god of Pleasure, that warm'd our desires,
Has broken his bow, and extinguish'd his fires;
And vows that himself and his mother will mourn,
Till Pan and fair Syrinx in triumph return.

'Forbear your addresses, and court us no more,
For we will perform what the deity swore;
But if you dare think of deserving our charms,
Away with your sheephooks, and take to your arms:
Then laurels and myrtles your brows shall adorn,
When Pan, and his son, and fair Syrinx return.'

SONG.

Fair, sweet, and young, receive a prize
Reserv'd for your victorious eyes:
From crowds, whom at your feet you see,
O pity, and distinguish me;
As I, from thousand beauties more,
Distinguish you, and only you adore.
Your face for conquest was design'd;
Your every motion charms my mind;

Angels, when you your silence break,
Forget their hymns to hear you speak;
But when, at once, they hear and view.
Are loth to mount, and long to stay with you.

No graces can your form improve,
But all are lost unless you love;
While that sweet passion you disdain,
Your veil and beauty are in vain:
In pity then prevent my fate,
For, after dying, all reprieve's too late.

SONG.

High state and honours to others impart,
But give me your heart:
That treasure, that treasure alone,
I beg for my own.
So gentle a love, so fervent a fire,
My soul does inspire;
That treasure, that treasure alone.
I beg for my own.
Your love let me crave;
Give me in possessing
So matchless a blessing;
That empire is all I would have.
Love's my petition,
All my ambition;
If e'er you discover
So faithful a lover,
So real a flame,
I'll die, I'll die;
So give up my game.

RONDELAY.

Chloe found Amyntas lying,
All in tears upon the plain;
Sighing to himself, and crying,
'Wretched I, to love in vain!
Kiss me, dear, before my dying;
Kiss me once, and ease my pain!'

Sighing to himself, and crying,
'Wretched I, to love in vain!
Ever scorning, and denying
To reward your faithful swain:
Kiss me, dear, before my dying;
Kiss me once, and ease my pain!'

'Ever scorning, and denying
To reward your faithful swain:'
Chloe, laughing at his crying,
Told him that 'he lov'd in vain:'
Kiss me, dear, before my dying;
Kiss me once, and ease my pain!

Chloe, laughing at his crying,
Told him that 'he lov'd in vain:'
But repenting and complying,
When he kiss'd, she kiss'd again:
Kiss'd him up, before his dying;
Kiss'd him up, and eas'd his pain,

SONG.

Go tell Amynta, gentle swain,
I would not die, nor dare complain:
Thy tuneful voice with numbers join,
Thy words will more prevail than mine.
To souls oppress'd, and dumb with grief,
The gods ordain this kind relief,
That music should in sounds convey
What dying lovers dare not say.

A sigh or tear, perhaps she'll give,
But love on pity cannot live:
Tell her that hearts for hearts were made,
And love with love is only paid:
Tell her my pains so fast increase,
That soon they will be past redress:
But, ah! the wretch that speechless lies,
Attends but death to close his eyes.

TO

A FAIR YOUNG LADY,

GOING OUT OF THE TOWN IN THE SPRING.

Ask not the cause, why sullen Spring
So long delays her flowers to bear;
Why warbling birds forget to sing,
And winter-storms invert the year:
Chloris is gone, and Fate provides
To make it Spring where she resides.

Chloris is gone, the cruel fair!
She cast not back a pitying eye;
But left her lover in despair,
To sigh, to languish, and to die:
Ah, how can those fair eyes endure
To give the wounds they will not cure?

Great god of Love! why hast thou made
A face that can all hearts command,
That all religions can invade,
And change the laws of every land?
Where thou hadst plac'd such power before,
Thou shouldst have made her mercy more.

When Chloris to the temple comes,
Adoring crowds before her fall;
She can restore the dead from tombs,
And every life but mine recall.
I only am by love design'd
To be the victim for mankind.

OF

A SCHOLAR AND HIS MISTRESS,

WHO BEING CROSSED BY THEIR FRIENDS, FELL MAD FOR ONE ANOTHER, AND NOW FIRST MEET IN BEDLAM.

[*Music within.*]

The lovers enter at opposite doors, each held by a keeper.

PHIL. Look, look, I see—I see my love appear!
'Tis he—'tis he alone,
For like him there is none:
'Tis the dear, dear man; 'tis thee, dear.
AMYNT. Hark! the winds war,
The foamy waves roar;
I see a ship afar,
Tossing and tossing, and making to the shore:
But what's that I view,
So radiant of hue,
St. Hermo, St. Hermo, that sits upon the sails?
Ah! No, no, no.
St. Hermo never, never shone so bright;
Tis Phillis, only Phillis, can shoot so fair a light:
'Tis Phillis, 'tis Phillis, that saves the ship alone,
For all the winds are hush'd, and the storm is over-blown.
PHIL. Let me go, let me run, let me fly to his arms.
AMYNT. If all the fates combine,
And all the furies join,
I'll force my way to Phillis, and break through the charm.

[*Here they break from their keepers, run to each other, and embrace.*]

PHIL. Shall I marry the man I love?
And shall I conclude my pains?
Now bless'd be the powers above,
I feel the blood bound in my veins;
With a lively leap it began to move,
And the vapours leave my brains.
AMYNT. Body join'd to body, and heart join'd to heart,
To make sure of the cure,
Go call the man in black to mumble o'er his part.
PHIL. But suppose he should stay—
AMYNT. At worst if he delay,
'Tis a work must be done,
We'll borrow but a day,
And the better, the sooner begun.
Chorus of both.] At worst if he delay, &c.

[*They run out together hand in hand.*

ELEGIES AND EPITAPHS.

UPON THE

DEATH OF LORD HASTINGS.

1649.

Must noble Hastings immaturely die,
The honour of his ancient family;
Beauty and learning thus together meet,
To bring a winding for a wedding-sheet?
Must Virtue prove Death's harbinger? must she,
With him expiring, feel mortality?
Is death, sin's wages, grace's now? shall art
Make us more learned, only to depart?
If merit be disease, if virtue death;
To be good, not to be; who'd then bequeath
Himself to discipline? who'd not esteem
Labour a crime? study, self-murder deem?
Our noble youth now have pretence to be
Dunces securely, ignorant healthfully.
Rare linguist? whose worth speaks itself, whose praise,
Though not his own, all tongues besides do raise;
Than whom great Alexander may seem less,
Who conquer'd men, but not their languages.
In his mouth, nations spake; his tongue might be
Interpreter to Greece, France, Italy.

His native soil was the four parts o' the' earth;
All Europe was too narrow for his birth.
A young apostle, and (with reverence may
I speak't) inspir'd with gift of tongues, as they.
Nature gave him, a child, what men in vain
Oft strive, by art though further'd, to obtain.
His body was an orb, his sublime soul
Did move on virtue's and on learning's pole;
Whose regular motions better to our view
Than Archimedes' sphere, the heavens did shew.
Graces and virtues, languages and arts,
Beauty and learning, fill'd up all the parts.
Heaven's gifts, which do like falling stars appear
Scatter'd in others, all, as in their sphere,
Were fix'd, conglobate in his soul; and thence
Shone through his body with sweet influence,
Letting their glories so on each limb fall,
The whole frame render'd was celestial.
Come, learned Ptolemy, and trial make
If thou this hero's altitude canst take:
But that transcends thy skill; thrice happy all,
Could we but prove thus astronomical.
Liv'd Tycho now, struck with this ray which shone,
More bright i' the morn than others beam at noon,
He'd take his astrolabe, and seek out here
What new star 'twas did gild our hemisphere.
Replenish'd then with such rare gifts as these,
Where was room left for such a foul disease?
The nation's sin hath drawn that veil, which shrouds
Our day-spring in so sad benighting clouds;
Heaven would no longer trust its pledge, but thus
Recall'd it, rapt its Ganymede from us.
Was there no milder way but the small-pox,
The very filthiness of Pandora's box?

So many spots, like næves on Venus' soil,
One jewel set off with so many a foil;
Blisters with pride swell'd, which through's flesh did sprout
Like rose-buds, stuck i' the' lily-skin about.
Each little pimple had a tear in it,
To wail the fault its rising did commit;
Which, rebel-like, with its own lord at strife,
Thus made an insurrection 'gainst his life.
Or were these gems sent to adorn his skin,
The cabinet of a richer soul within?
No comet need foretel his change drew on,
Whose corpse might seem a constellation.
O! had he died of old, how great a strife
Had been, who from his death should draw their life?
Who should, by one rich draught, become whate'er
Seneca, Cato, Numa, Cæsar, were!
Learn'd, virtuous, pious, great; and have by this
An universal metempsychosis.
Must all these aged sires in one funeral
Expire? all die in one so young, so small?
Who, had he liv'd his life out, his great fame
Had swol'n 'bove any Greek or Roman name!
But hasty Winter, with one blast, hath brought
The hopes of Autumn, Summer, Spring, to nought.
Thus fades the oak i' the sprig; i' the' blade the corn;
Thus, without young, this phœnix dies, new-born.
Must then old three-leg'd grey-beards, with their gout,
Catarrhs, rheums, aches, live three ages out?
Time's offals, only fit for the' hospital!
Or to hang antiquaries' rooms withal!
Must drunkards, lechers, spent with sinning, live
With such helps as broths, possets, physic give?
None live but such as should die? shall we meet
With none but ghostly Fathers in the street?

Grief makes me rail; sorrow will force its way,
And showers of tears tempestuous sighs best lay.
The tongue may fail; but overflowing eyes
Will weep out lasting streams of elegies.
But thou, O Virgin-widow! left alone,
Now thy belov'd, heaven-ravish'd, spouse is gone,
Whose skilful sire in vain strove to apply
Med'cines, when thy balm was no remedy,
With greater than Platonic love, O wed
His soul, though not his body, to thy bed:
Let that make thee a mother; bring thou forth
The ideas of his virtue, knowledge, worth;
Transcribe the' original in new copies; give
Hastings o' the' better part: so shall he live
In's nobler half; and the great grandsire be
Of an heroic, divine progeny;
An issue which to' eternity shall last,
Yet but the irradiations which he cast.
Erect no mausoleums; for his best
Monument is his spouse's marble breast.

TO THE

MEMORY OF MR. OLDHAM.

OB. 1683,

FAREWELL, too little, and too lately known,
Whom I began to think and call—my own;
For sure our souls were near allied, and thine
Cast in the same poetic mould with mine.
One common note on either lyre did strike,
And knaves and fools we both abhorr'd alike.
To the same goal did both our studies drive;
The last set out the soonest did arrive.

Thus Nisus fell upon the slippery place,
Whilst his young friend perform'd and won the race.
O early ripe! to thy abundant store
What could advancing age have added more?
It might, what Nature never gives the young,
Have taught the smoothness of thy native tongue:
But satire needs not those, and wit will shine
Through the harsh cadence of a rugged line.
A noble error, and but seldom made,
When poets are by too much force betray'd.
Thy generous fruits, though gather'd ere their prime,
Still show'd a quickness; and maturing Time
But mellows what we write to the dull sweets of rhyme.
Once more, hail, and farewell; farewell, thou young,
But ah, too short Marcellus of our tongue!
Thy brows with ivy and with laurels bound;
But Fate and gloomy Night encompass thee around.

ODE

TO THE PIOUS MEMORY OF THE ACCOMPLISHED YOUNG LADY,

MRS. ANNE KILLIGREW.

EXCELLENT IN THE TWO SISTER ARTS OF POESY AND PAINTING.

Thou youngest virgin-daughter of the skies,
Made in the last promotion of the bless'd;
Whose palms, new pluck'd from Paradise,
In spreading branches more sublimely rise,
Rich with immortal green above the rest:

Whether adopted to some neighbouring star,
Thou roll'st above us in thy wandering race,
Or, in procession fix'd and regular,
Mov'st with the heaven's majestic pace;
Or, call'd to more superior bliss,
Thou tread'st, with seraphims, the vast abyss;
Whatever happy region is thy place,
Cease thy celestial song a little space;
Thou wilt have time enough for hymns divine,
Since Heaven's eternal year is thine.
Hear, then, a mortal muse thy praise rehearse
In no ignoble verse;
But such as thy own voice did practise here,
When thy first fruits of poesy were given
To make thyself a welcome inmate there;
While yet a young probationer,
And candidate of Heaven!

If by traduction came thy mind,
Our wonder is the less, to find
A soul so charming from a stock so good;
Thy father was transfus'd into thy blood:
So wert thou born into a tuneful strain,
An early, rich, and inexhausted vein,
But if thy pre-existing soul
Was form'd at first with myriads more,
It did through all the mighty poets roll,
Who Greek or Latin laurels wore,
And was that Sappho last, which once it was before.
If so, then cease thy flight, O heaven-born mind!
Thou hast no dross to purge from thy rich ore;

Nor can thy soul a fairer mansion find,
Than was the beauteous frame she left behind:
Return to fill, or mend, the choir of thy celestial kind.

May we presume to say that, at thy birth, [earth?
New joy was sprung in heaven, as well as here on
For sure the milder planets did combine
On thy auspicious horoscope to shine,
And e'en the most malicious were in trine.
Thy brother angels at thy birth
Strung each his lyre, and tun'd it high,
That all the people of the sky
Might know a poetess was born on earth;
And then, if ever, mortal ears
Had heard the music of the spheres.
And if no clustering swarm of bees
On thy sweet mouth distill'd their golden dew,
'Twas that such vulgar miracles
Heaven had not leisure to renew:
For all thy bless'd fraternity of love [above.
Solemniz'd there thy birth, and kept thy holy-day

O gracious God! how far have we
Profan'd thy heavenly gift of poesy?
Made prostitute and profligate the Muse,
Debas'd to each obscene and impious use,
Whose harmony was first ordain'd above
For tongues of angels, and for hymns of love?
O wretched we! why were we hurried down
This lubrique and adulterate age,
(Nay, added fat pollutions of our own)
To' increase the streaming ordures of the stage?

What can we say to' excuse our second fall?
Let this thy vestal, Heaven, atone for all:
Her Arethusian stream remains unsoil'd,
Unmix'd with foreign filth, and undefil'd;
Her wit was more than man, her innocence a child.

Art she had none, yet wanted none,
For Nature did that want supply;
So rich in treasures of her own,
She might our boasted stores defy:
Such noble vigour did her verse adorn,
That it seem'd borrow'd, where 'twas only born.
Her morals, too, were in her bosom bred,
By great examples daily fed,
What in the best of books, her father's life, she read.
And to be read herself she need not fear;
Each test, and every light, her Muse will bear,
Though Epictetus, with his lamp, were there.
E'en love, for love sometimes her Muse exprest,
Was but a lambent flame which play'd about her breast,
Light as the vapours of a morning-dream;
So cold herself, while she such warmth express'd,
'Twas Cupid bathing in Diana's stream.

Born to the spacious empire of the Nine,
One would have thought she should have been content
To manage well that mighty government;
But what can young ambitious souls confine?
To the next realm she stretch'd her sway,
For Painture near adjoining lay,
A plenteous province, and alluring prey.

A Chamber of Dependeneies was fram'd,
(As conquerors will never want pretence,
When arm'd, to justify the' offence)
And the whole fief, in right of poetry, she elaim'd.
The country open lay without defence;
For poets frequent inroads there had made,
And perfectly eould represent
The shape, the faee, with every lineament,
And all the large domains which the dumb sister sway'd;
All bow'd beneath her government,
Reeeiv'd in triumph wheresoe'er she went:
Her peneil drew whate'er her soul design'd,
And oft the happy draught surpass'd the image in her mind.
The silvan scenes of herds and floeks,
And fruitful plains, and barren rocks,
Of shallow brooks that flow'd so clear,
The bottom did the top appear;
Of deeper too, and ampler floods,
Which, as in mirrors, show'd the woods;
Of lofty trees, with sacred shades,
And perspeetives of pleasant glades,
Where nymphs of brightest form appear,
And shaggy Satyrs standing near,
Which them at onee admire and fear.
The ruins, too, of some majestic piece,
Boasting the power of aneient Rome or Greeee,
Whose statues, friezes, columns, broken lie,
And, though defac'd, the wonder of the eye;
What Nature, Art, bold Fiction, e'er durst frame,
Her forming hand gave feature to the name.
So strange a concourse ne'er was seen before,
But when the peopled Ark the whole creation bore.

The scene then chang'd, with bold erected look
Our martial King the sight with reverence strook:
For, not content to' express his outward part,
Her hand call'd out the image of his heart:
His warlike mind, his soul devoid of fear,
His high-designing thoughts were figur'd there,
As when, by magic, ghosts are made appear.
Our phœnix-queen was pourtray'd, too, so bright,
Beauty alone could beauty take so right:
Her dress, her shape, her matchless grace,
Were all observ'd, as well as heavenly face.
With such a peerless majesty she stands,
As, in that day, she took the crown from sacred hands,
Before a train of heroines was seen
In beauty foremost, as in rank, the Queen.
Thus nothing to her genius was denied,
But like a ball of fire, the further thrown,
Still with a greater blaze she shone,
And her bright soul broke out on every side.
What next she had design'd Heaven only knows:
To such immoderate growth her conquest rose,
That Fate alone its progress could oppose.

Now all those charms, that blooming grace,
The well-proportioned shape, and beauteous face,
Shall never more be seen by mortal eyes;
In earth the much-lamented virgin lies.
Not wit, nor piety, could Fate prevent;
Nor was the cruel Destiny content
To finish all the murder at a blow,
To sweep, at once, her life and beauty too;
But, like a harden'd felon, took a pride
To work more mischievously slow,

And plunder'd first, and then destroy'd.
O double sacrilege on things divine,
To rob the relic, and deface the shrine!
But thus Orinda died:
Heaven, by the same disease, did both translate:
As equal were their souls, so equal was their fate.

Mean time, her warlike brother on the seas
His waving streamers to the winds displays,
And vows for his return, with vain devotion, pays.
Ah, generous youth, that wish forbear,
The winds too soon will waft thee here!
Slack all thy sails, and fear to come,
Alas, thou know'st not thou art wreck'd at home!
No more shalt thou behold thy sister's face,
Thou hast already had her last embrace.
But look aloft, and if thou ken'st from far,
Among the Pleiads a new-kindled star;
If any sparkles than the rest more bright,
'Tis she that shines in that propitious light.

When in mid-air the golden trump shall sound,
To raise the nations under ground;
When, in the valley of Jehoshaphat,
The judging God shall close the book of Fate,
And there the last assizes keep
For those who wake, and those who sleep;
When rattling bones together fly,
From the four corners of the sky;
When sinews o'er the skeletons are spread,
Those cloth'd with flesh, and life inspires the dead;
The sacred Poets first shall hear the sound,
And foremost from the tomb shall bound,
For they are cover'd with the lightest ground;

And straight, with inborn vigour, on the wing,
Like mountain larks to the new morning sing.
There thou, sweet saint! before the quire shall go,
As harbinger of Heaven, the way to show,
The way which thou so well hast learnt below.

UPON THE

DEATH OF THE EARL OF DUNDEE.

Oh, last and best of Scots! who didst maintain
Thy country's freedom from a foreign reign;
New people fill the land, now thou art gone,
New gods the temples, and new kings the throne.
Scotland and thee did each in other live;
Nor wouldst thou her, nor could she thee survive.
Farewell! who dying didst support the state,
And couldst not fall but with thy country's fate.

ELEONORA:

A PANEGYRICAL POEM.

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF THE LATE COUNTESS OF ABINGDON.*

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE EARL OF ABINGDON, &c.

MY LORD,

THE commands, with which you honoured me some months ago, are now performed: they had been sooner; but betwixt ill health, some business, and many troubles, I was forced to defer them till this time. Ovid, going to his banishment, and writing from on shipboard to his friends, excused the faults of his poetry by his misfortunes; and told them, that good verses never flow but from a serene and composed spirit. Wit, which is a kind of Mercury, with wings fastened to his head and

* Eleonora, eldest daughter and sole heir of Sir Henry Lee, Bart. She became the wife of James, first Earl of Abingdon, and died May 31, 1691. See *Malone's Dryden*.

heels, can fly but slowly in a damp air. I therefore chose rather to obey you late, than ill; if at least I am capable of writing any thing, at any time, which is worthy your perusal and your patronage I cannot say that I have escaped from a shipwreck, but have only gained a rock by hard swimming, where I may pant awhile and gather breath: for the doctors give me a sad assurance, that my disease* never took its leave of any man but with a purpose to return. However, my Lord, I have laid hold on the interval, and managed the small stock which age has left me to the best advantage, in performing this inconsiderable service to my Lady's memory. We, who are priests of Apollo, have not the inspiration when we please; but must wait till the god comes rushing on us, and invades us with a fury which we are not able to resist; which gives us double strength while the fit continues, and leaves us languishing and spent at its departure. Let me not seem to boast, my Lord; for I have really felt it on this occasion, and prophesied beyond my natural power. Let me add, and hope to be believed, that the excellency of the subject contributed much to the happiness of the execution; and that the weight of thirty years was taken off me while I was writing. I swam with the tide, and the water under me was buoyant. The reader will easily observe that I was transported by the multitude and variety of my similitudes, which are generally the product of a luxuriant fancy, and the wantonness of wit. Had

* The gout.

I called in my judgment to my assistance, I had certainly retrenched many of them. But I defend them not; let them pass for beautiful faults amongst the better sort of critics: for the whole poem, though written in that which they call Heroic verse, is of the Pindaric nature, as well in the thought as the expression; and, as such, requires the same grains of allowance for it. It was intended, as your Lordship sees in the title, not for an elegy, but a panegyric: a kind of apotheosis, indeed, if a heathen word may be applied to a Christian use. And, on all occasions of praise, if we take the ancients for our patterns, we are bound, by prescription, to employ the magnificence of words, and the force of figures, to adorn the sublimity of thoughts. Isocrates amongst the Grecian orators, and Cicero and the younger Pliny amongst the Romans, have left us their precedents for our security: for I think I need not mention the inimitable Pindar, who stretches, on these pinions, out of sight, and is carried upward, as it were, into another world.

This, at least, my Lord, I may justly plead, that if I have not performed so well as I think I have, yet I have used my best endeavours to excel myself. One disadvantage I have had, which is, never to have known or seen my Lady: and to draw the lineaments of her mind from the description which I have received from others, is for a painter to set himself at work without the living original before him; which, the more beautiful it is, will be so much the more difficult for him to conceive, when he has only a relation given him of such and such

features by an acquaintance or a friend, without the nice touches, which give the best resemblance, and make the graces of the picture. Every artist is apt enough to flatter himself (and I among the rest) that his own ocular observations would have discovered more perfections, at least others, than have been delivered to him; though I have received mine from the best hands, that is, from persons who neither want a just understanding of my Lady's worth, nor a due veneration for her memory.

Dr. Donne, (the greatest wit, though not the greatest poet of our nation) acknowledges that he had never seen Mrs. Drury, whom he has made immortal in his admirable Anniversaries. I have had the same fortune, though I have not succeeded to the same genius. However, I have followed his footsteps in the design of his panegyric, which was to raise an emulation in the living, to copy out the example of the dead. And therefore it was that I once intended to have called this poem *The Pattern;* and though, on a second consideration, I changed the title into the name of the illustrious person, yet the design continues, and *Eleonora* is still the pattern of charity, devotion, and humility: of the best wife, the best mother, and the best of friends.

And now, my Lord, though I have endeavoured to answer your commands, yet I could not answer it to the world, nor to my conscience, if I gave not your Lordship my testimony of being the best husband now living: I say my testimony only; for the praise of it is given you by yourself. They who

despise the rules of virtue, both in their practice and their morals, will think this a very trivial commendation. But I think it the peculiar happiness of the Countess of Abingdon to have been so truly loved by you, while she was living, and so gratefully honoured after she was dead. Few there are who have either had, or could have, such a loss; and yet fewer who carried their love and constancy beyond the grave. The exteriors of mourning, a decent funeral, and black habits, are the usual stints of common husbands; and perhaps their wives deserve no better than to be mourned with hypocrisy, and forgot with ease. But you have distinguished yourself from ordinary lovers by a real and lasting grief for the deceased; and by endeavouring to raise for her the most durable monument, which is that of verse. And so it would have proved, if the workman had been equal to the work, and your choice of the artificer as happy as your design. Yet, as Phydias, when he had made the statue of Minerva, could not forbear to engrave his own name as author of the piece; so give me leave to hope that, by subscribing mine to this poem, I may live by the goddess, and transmit my name to posterity by the memory of her's. It is no flattery to assure your Lordship, that she is remembered, in the present age, by all who have had the honour of her conversation and acquaintance; and that I have never been in any company, since the news of her death was first brought me, where they have not extolled her virtues, and even spoken the same things of her in prose which I have done in verse.

I therefore think myself obliged to thank your Lordship for the commission which you have given me: how I have acquitted myself of it must be left to the opinion of the world, in spite of any protestation which I can enter against the present age, as incompetent or corrupt judges. For my comfort they are but Englishmen, and, as such, if they think ill of me to-day, they are inconstant enough to think well of me to-morrow. And, after all, I have not much to thank my fortune that I was born amongst them. The good of both sexes are so few in England, that they stand like exceptions against general rules: and though one of them has deserved a greater commendation than I could give her, they have taken care that I should not tire my pen with frequent exercise on the like subjects; that praises, like taxes, should be appropriated, and left almost as individual as the person. They say my talent is satire; if it be so, it is a fruitful age, and there is an extraordinary crop to gather: but a single hand is insufficient for such a harvest. They have sown the dragon's teeth themselves, and it is but just they should reap each other in lampoons. You, my Lord, who have the character of honour, (though it is not my happiness to know you) may stand aside, with the small remainders of the English nobility, truly such; and, unhurt yourselves, behold the mad combat. If I have pleased you, and some few others, I have obtained my end. You see, I have disabled myself, like an Elected Speaker of the House; yet, like him, I have undertaken the charge, and find the burden sufficiently recompensed by the honour. Be pleased to accept of

these my unworthy labours, this paper-monument; and let her pious memory, which I am sure is sacred to you, not only plead the pardon of my many faults, but gain me your protection, which is ambitiously sought by,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's

most obedient servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

ELEONORA:

A PANEGYRICAL POEM.

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF THE LATE COUNTESS OF ABINGDON.

As when some great and gracious monarch dies,
Soft whispers first, and mournful murmurs rise,
Among the sad attendants, then the sound
Soon gathers voice, and spreads the news around,
Through town and country; till the dreadful blast
Is blown to distant colonies at last,
Who then, perhaps, were offering vows in vain,
For his long life, and for his happy reign:
So slowly, by degrees, unwilling Fame
Did matchless Eleonora's fate proclaim,
Till public as the loss the news became.

The nation felt it in the' extremest parts,
With eyes o'erflowing, and with bleeding hearts;
But most the poor, whom daily she supplied;
Beginning to be such, but when she died:
For, while she liv'd, they slept in peace by night,
Secure of bread as of returning light;
And with such firm dependance on the day,
That Need grew pamper'd, and forgot to pray:
So sure the dole, so ready at their call,
They stood prepar'd to see the manna fall.

Such multitudes she fed, she cloth'd, she nurs'd,
That she, herself, might fear her wanting first.

Of her five talents other five she made;
Heaven, that had largely given, was largely paid:
And in few lives, in wondrous few, we find
A fortune better fitted to the mind.
Nor did her alms from ostentation fall,
Or proud desire of praise; the soul gave all:
Unbrib'd it gave; or if a bribe appear,
No less than Heaven, to heap huge treasures there.

Want pass'd for merit at her open door;
Heaven saw he safely might increase his poor,
And trust their sustenance with her so well,
As not to be at charge of miracle.
None could be needy whom she saw or knew;
All in the compass of her sphere she drew:
He who could touch her garment, was as sure
As the first Christians of the' Apostles' cure.
The distant heard, by fame, her pious deeds,
And laid her up for their extremest needs;
A future cordial for a fainting mind;
For what was ne'er refus'd, all hop'd to find,
Each in his turn. The rich might freely come,
As to a friend; but to the poor—'twas home.
As to some holy house the' afflicted came,
The hunger-starv'd, the naked and the lame;
Want and diseases fled before her name.
For zeal like her's her servants were too slow;
She was the first, where need requir'd, to go;
Herself the foundress and attendant too.

Sure she had guests sometimes to entertain,
Guests in disguise, of her great Master's train:
Her Lord himself might come, for aught we know,
Since in a servant's form he liv'd below:
Beneath her roof he might be pleas'd to stay;
Or some benighted angel, in his way,

Might ease his wings, and seeing Heaven appear
In its best work of mercy, think it there;
Where all the deeds of charity and love
Were in as constant method, as above,
All carried on; all of a piece with theirs;
As free her alms, as diligent her cares;
As loud her praises, and as warm her prayers.

Yet was she not profuse, but fear'd to waste,
And wisely manag'd, that the stock might last;
That all might be supplied, and she not grieve,
When crowds appear'd, she had not to relieve:
Which to prevent, she still increas'd her store;
Laid up, and spar'd, that she might give the more.
So Pharaoh, or some greater king than he,
Provided for the seventh necessity;
Taught from above his magazines to frame,
That famine was prevented ere it came.
Thus Heaven, though all-sufficient, shows a thrift
In his economy, and bounds his gift:
Creating, for our day, one single light;
And his reflection, too, supplies the night.
Perhaps a thousand other worlds, that lie
Remote from us, and latent in the sky,
Are lighten'd by his beams, and kindly nurst,
Of which our earthly dunghill is the worst.

Now, as all virtues keep the middle line,
Yet somewhat more to one extreme incline,
Such was her soul; abhorring avarice,
Bounteous, but almost bounteous to a vice:
Had she given more, it had profusion been,
And turn'd the' excess of goodness into sin.

These virtues rais'd her fabric to the sky;
For that, which is next Heaven, is charity.

But as high turrets, for their airy steep,
Require foundations in proportion deep;
And lofty cedars as far upwards shoot,
As to the nether heavens they drive the root,
So low did her secure foundation lie,
She was not humble, but humility,
Scarcely she knew that she was great, or fair,
Or wise, beyond what other women are, [pare.
Or, which is better, knew, but never durst com-
For to be conscious of what all admire,
And not be vain, advances virtue higher.
But still she found, or rather thought she found,
Her own worth wanting, others' to abound;
Ascrib'd above their due to every one,
Unjust and scanty to herself alone.

Such her devotion was, as might give rules
Of speculation to disputing schools,
And teach us equally the scales to hold
Betwixt the two extremes of hot and cold;
That pious heat may moderately prevail,
And we be warm'd, but not be scorch'd with zeal.
Business might shorten, not disturb, her prayer;
Heaven had the best, if not the greater share.
An active life long orisons forbids;
Yet still she pray'd, for still she pray'd by deeds.

Her every day was Sabbath; only free
From hours of prayer for hours of charity:
Such as the Jews from servile toil releas'd,
Where works of mercy were a part of rest;
Such as blest angels exercise above,
Varied with sacred hymns and acts of love:
Such Sabbaths as that one she now enjoys,
E'en that perpetual one, which she employs,

(For such vicissitudes in Heaven there are)
In praise alternate, and alternate prayer.
All this she practis'd here; that when she sprung
Amidst the choirs, at the first sight she sung:
Sung, and was sung herself in angels' lays;
For, praising her, they did her Maker praise.
All offices of Heaven so well she knew
Before she came, that nothing there was new;
And she was so familiarly receiv'd,
As one returning, not as one arriv'd.

Muse, down again precipitate thy flight;
For how can mortal eyes sustain immortal light?
But as the sun in water we can bear,
Yet not the sun, but his reflection there,
So let us view her, here, in what she was,
And take her image in this watery glass:
Yet look not every lineament to see;
Some will be cast in shades, and some will be
So lamely drawn, you'll scarcely know 'tis she.
For where such various virtues we recite,
'Tis like the Milky-way, all over bright, [light.
But sown so thick with stars, 'tis undistinguish'd

Her virtue, not her virtues, let us call;
For one heroic comprehends them all:
One (as a constellation is but one,
Though 'tis a train of stars that, rolling on,
Rise in their turn, and in the Zodiac run,)
Ever in motion; now 'tis faith ascends,
Now hope, now charity, that upward tends,
And downwards with diffusive good descends.

As in perfumes, compos'd with art and cost,
'Tis hard to say what scent is uppermost;
Nor this part musk or civet can we call,
Or amber, but a rich result of all;

So she was all a sweet, whose every part,
In due proportion mix'd, proclaim the Maker's art.
No single virtue we could most commend,
Whether the wife, the mother, or the friend;
For she was all, in that supreme degree,
That as no one prevail'd so all was she.
The several parts lay hidden in the piece;
The' occasion but exerted that or this.
A wife as tender, and as true withal,
As the first woman was before her fall:
Made for the man, of whom she was a part;
Made to attract his eyes, and keep his heart.
A second Eve, but by no crime accurst;
As beauteous, not as brittle, as the first.
Had she been first, still Paradise had been,
And Death had found no entrance by her sin.
So she not only had preserv'd from ill
Her sex and ours, but liv'd their pattern still.
Love and obedience to her Lord she bore;
She much obey'd him, but she lov'd him more:
Not aw'd to duty by superior sway,
But taught by his indulgence to obey.
Thus we love God, as author of our good;
So subjects love just kings,—or so they should.
Nor was it with ingratitude return'd;
In equal fires the blissful couple burn'd;
One joy possess'd them both, and in one grief they mourn'd.
His passion still improv'd; he lov'd so fast,
As if he fear'd each day would be her last.
Too true a prophet, to foresee the fate
That should so soon divide their happy state,
When he to Heaven entirely must restore
That love, that heart, where he went halves before;

Yet, as the soul is all in every part,
So God and he might each have all her heart.
So had her children too; for Charity
Was not more fruitful or more kind than she:
Each under other by degrees they grew,
A goodly perspective of distant view.
Anchises look'd not with so pleas'd a face,
In numbering o'er his future Roman race,
And marshalling the heroes of his name,
As in their order next to light they came:
Nor Cybele, with half so kind an eye,
Survey'd her sons and daughters of the sky;
Proud, shall I say, of her immortal fruit?
As far as pride with heavenly minds may suit.
Her pious love excell'd to all she bore;
New objects only multiplied it more:
And as the Chosen found the pearly grain
As much as every vessel could contain;
As in the blissful vision each shall share
As much of glory as his soul can bear;
So did she love, and so dispense her care.
Her eldest thus, by consequence, was best,
As longer cultivated than the rest.
The babe had all that infant-care beguiles,
And early knew his mother in her smiles:
But when dilated organs let in day
To the young soul, and gave it room to play,
At his first aptness, the maternal love,
Those rudiments of reason did improve:
The tender age was pliant to command,
Like wax it yielded to the forming hand;
True to the' artificer, the labour'd mind
With ease was pious, generous, just, and kind;

Soft for impression, from the first prepar'd,
Till virtue with long exercise grew hard;
With every act confirm'd, and made at last
So durable as not to be effac'd,
It turn'd to habit; and, from vices free,
Goodness resolv'd into necessity.
Thus fix'd she Virtue's image, that's her own,
Till the whole mother in the children shone;
For that was their perfection; she was such,
They never could express her mind too much.
So unexhausted her perfections were,
That, for more children, she had more to spare;
For souls unborn, whom her untimely death
Depriv'd of bodies, and of mortal breath;
And, could they take the' impressions of her mind,
Enough still left to sanctify her kind.
Then wonder not to see this soul extend
The bounds, and seek some other self, a friend;
As swelling seas to gentle rivers glide,
To seek repose, and empty out the tide;
So this full soul, in narrow limits pent,
Unable to contain her, sought a vent
To issue out, and in some friendly breast
Discharge her treasures, and securely rest;
To' unbosom all the secrets of her heart,
Take good advice, but better to impart:
(For 'tis the bliss of friendship's holy state,
To mix their minds, and to communicate;
Though bodies cannot, souls can penetrate:)
Fix'd to her choice, inviolably true,
And wisely choosing, for she chose but few.
Some she must have, but in no one could find
A tally fitted for so large a mind.

The souls of friends like kings in progress are;
Still in their own, though from the palace far:
Thus her friend's heart her country-dwelling was,
A sweet retirement to a coarser place;
Where pomp and ceremonies enter'd not, [forgot.
Where greatness was shut out, and business well
This is the' imperfect draught, but short; as far
As the true height and bigness of a star
Exceeds the measures of the' astronomer.
She shines above, we know; but in what place,
How near the throne, and Heaven's imperial face,
By our weak optics is but vainly guest;
Distance and altitude conceal the rest.
Though all these rare endowments of the mind
Were in a narrow space of life confin'd,
The figure was with full perfection crown'd,
Though not so large an orb, as truly round.
As when in glory, through the public place
The spoils of conquer'd nations were to pass,
And but one day for triumph was allow'd,
The Consul was constrain'd his pomp to crowd;
And so the swift procession hurried on,
That all, though not distinctly, might be shown:
So in the straiten'd bounds of life confin'd,
She gave but glimpses of her glorious mind;
And multitudes of virtues pass'd along,
Each pressing foremost in the mighty throng,
Ambitious to be seen, and then make room
For greater multitudes that were to come.
Yet unemploy'd no minute slipt away;
Moments were precious in so short a stay.
The haste of Heaven to have her was so great,
That some were single acts, though each com-
But every act stood ready to repeat. [plete,

Her fellow-saints with busy care will look
For her bless'd name, in Fate's eternal book;
And pleas'd to be outdone, with joy will see
Numberless virtues, endless charity:
But more will wonder at so short an age,
To find a blank beyond the thirtieth page;
And, with a pious fear, begin to doubt
The piece imperfect, and the rest torn out:
But 'twas her Saviour's time; and could there be
A copy near the original, 'twas she.

As precious gums are not for lasting fire,
They but perfume the temple, and expire;
So was she soon exhal'd, and vanish'd hence,
A short, sweet odour, of a vast expense.
She vanish'd, we can scarcely say she died;
For but a *now* did Heaven and earth divide:
She pass'd serenely with a single breath;
This moment perfect health, the next was death:
One sigh did her eternal bliss assure;
So little penance needs when souls are almost pure.
As gentle dreams our waking thoughts pursue,
Or, one dream pass'd, we slide into a new;
So close they follow, such wild order keep,
We think ourselves awake, and are asleep;
So softly death succeeded life in her:
She did but dream of Heaven, and she was there.

No pains she suffer'd, nor expir'd with noise,
Her soul was whisper'd out with God's still voice;
As an old friend is beckon'd to a feast,
And treated like a long-familiar guest,
He took her as he found, but found her so,
As one in hourly readiness to go:
E'en on that day, in all her trim prepar'd,
As early notice she from Heaven had heard,

And some descending courier from above
Had given her timely warning to remove;
Or counsell'd her to dress the nuptial room,
For on that night the bridegroom was to come.
He kept his hour, and found her, where she lay,
Cloth'd all in white, the livery of the day.
Scarce had she sin'd in thought, or word, or act,
Unless omissions were to pass for fact;
That hardly Death, a consequence could draw,
To make her liable to Nature's law.
And, that she died, we only have to show
The mortal part of her she left below:
The rest (so smooth, to suddenly she went,)
Look'd like translation through she firmament,
Or like the fiery car on the third errand sent.

O happy soul! if thou canst view from high,
Where thou art all intelligence, all eye;
If looking up to God, or down to us,
Thou find'st that any way be pervious,
Survey the ruins of thy house, and see
Thy widow'd and thy orphan family;
Look on thy tender pledges left behind;
And, if thou canst a vacant minute find
From heavenly joys, that interval afford
To thy sad children, and thy mourning Lord?
See how they grieve, mistaken in their love,
And shed a beam of comfort from above;
Give them, as much as mortal eyes can bear,
A transient view of thy full glories there,
That they with modcrate sorrow may sustain
And mollify their losses in thy gain;
Or else divide the grief; for such thou wert,
That should not all relations bear a part,
It were enough to break a single heart.

Let this suffice: nor thou, great saint! refuse
This humble tribute of no vulgar Muse;
Who, not by cares, or wants, or age deprest,
Stems a wild deluge with a dauntless breast;
And dares to sing thy praises in a clime
Where Vice triumphs, and Virtue is a crime;
Where e'en to draw the picture of thy mind,
Is satire on the most of humankind:
Take it while yet 'tis praise; before my rage,
Unsafely just, break loose on this bad age;
So bad, that thou thyself hadst no defence
From vice, but barely by departing hence.
Be what, and where thou art:—to wish thy place
Were, in the best, presumption more than grace.
Thy relics (such thy works of mercy are)
Have, in this Poem, been my holy care.
As earth thy body keeps, thy soul the sky,
So shall this verse preserve thy memory; [thee.
For thou shalt make it live, because it sings of

ON

THE DEATH OF AMYNTAS.

A PASTORAL ELEGY.

'Twas on a joyless and a gloomy morn,
Wet was the grass, and hung with pearls the thorn,
When Damon, who design'd to pass the day
With hounds and horns, and chase the flying prey,
Rose early from his bed; but soon he found
The welkin pitch'd with sullen clouds around,
An eastern wind, and dew upon the ground.

Thus, while he stood, and, sighing, did survey
The fields, and curs'd the' ill omens of the day,
He saw Menalcas come with heavy pace,
Wet were his eyes, and cheerless was his face;
He wrung his hands, distracted with his care,
And sent his voice before him from afar:
'Return, (he cried,) return, unhappy swain,
The spungy clouds are fill'd with gathering rain;
The promise of the day not only cross'd,
But e'en the Spring, the Spring itself is lost.
Amyntas—Oh!'—He could not speak the rest,
Nor needed, for presaging Damon guest.
Equal with Heaven young Damon lov'd the boy,
The boast of Nature, both his parents' joy.
His graceful form revolving in his mind,
So great a genius, and a soul so kind,
Gave sad assurance that his fears were true;
Too well the envy of the gods he knew:
For when their gifts too lavishly are plac'd,
Soon they repent, and will not make them last.
For sure it was too bountiful a dole,
The mother's features, and the father's soul:—
Then thus he cried, 'The Morn bespoke the news;
The Morning did her cheerful light diffuse;
But see how suddenly she chang'd her face,
And brought on clouds and rain, the day's disgrace;
Just such, Amyntas, was thy promis'd race.
What charms adorn'd thy youth, where Nature smil'd,
And more than man was given us in a child!
His infancy was ripe; a soul sublime
In years so tender that prevented time:

Heaven gave him all at once; then snatch'd away,
Ere mortals all his beauties could survey; [day.'
Just like the flower that buds and withers in a

Men. 'The mother, lovely, though with grief op-
Reclin'd his dying head upon her breast; [prest,
The mournful family stood all around;
One groan was heard, one universal sound,
All were in floods of tears and endless sorrow drown'd.
So dire a sadness sat on every look,
E'en Death repented he had given the stroke;
He griev'd his fatal work had been ordain'd,
But promis'd length of life to those who yet remain'd.
The mother's and her eldest daughter's grace,
It seems, had brib'd him to prolong their space.
The father bore it with undaunted soul,
Like one who durst his destiny control;
Yet with becoming grief he bore his part,
Resign'd his son, but not resign'd his heart:
Patient as Job; and may he live to see,
Like him, a new increasing family!'

Dam. 'Such is my wish, and such my prophecy.
For yet, my friend, the beauteous mould remains;
Long may she exercise her fruitful pains!
But, ah! with better hap; and bring a race
More lasting, and endued with equal grace!
Equal she may, but farther none can go;
For he was all that was exact below.'

Men. 'Damon, behold yon breaking purple cloud;
Hear'st thou not hymns and songs divinely loud?
There mounts Amyntas; the young cherubs play
About their godlike mate, and sing him on his way.

He cleaves the liquid air; behold he flies,
And every moment gains upon the skies.
The new-come guest admires the' ethereal state,
The sapphire portal, and the golden gate;
And now, admitted in the shining throng,
He shows the passport which he brought along:
His passport is his innocence and grace,
Well known to all the natives of the place.
Now sing, ye joyful Angels, and admire
Your brother's voice, that comes to mend your quire:
Sing you, while endless tears our eyes bestow;
For, like Amyntas, none is left below.'

ON THE

DEATH OF A VERY YOUNG GENTLEMAN.

He who could view the book of Destiny,
And read whatever there was writ of thee,
O charming Youth! in the first opening page,
So many graces in so green an age,
Such wit, such modesty, such strength of mind,
A soul at once so manly and so kind,
Would wonder, when he turn'd the volume o'er,
And after some few leaves should find no more,
Nought but a blank remain, a dead void space,
A step of life that promis'd such a race.
We must not, dare not think, that Heaven began
A child, and could not finish him a man;
Reflecting what a mighty store was laid
Of rich materials, and a model made;

The cost already furnish'd, so bestow'd,
As more was never to one soul allow'd;
Yet after this profusion, spent in vain,
Nothing but mouldering ashes to remain!
I guess not, lest I split upon the shelf,
Yet, durst I guess, Heaven kept it for himself,
And giving us the use, did soon recal,
Ere we could spare, the mighty principal.
Thus then he disappear'd, was rarified;
For 'tis improper speech to say—he died;
He was exhal'd, his great Creator drew
His spirit, as the sun the morning-dew.
'Tis sin produces death; and he had none
But the taint Adam left on every son.
He added not, he was so pure, so good,
'Twas but the' original forfeit of his blood;
And that so little, that the river ran
More clear than the corrupted fount began.
Nothing remain'd of the first muddy clay,
The length of course had wash'd it in the way;
So deep, and yet so clear, we might behold
The gravel bottom, and that bottom, gold.
As such we lov'd, admir'd, almost ador'd,
Gave all the tribute mortals could afford:
Perhaps we gave so much, the Powers above
Grew angry at our superstitious love;
For when we more than human homage pay,
The charming cause is justly snatch'd away.
Thus was the crime not his, but ours alone;
And yet we murmur that he went so soon;
Though miracles are short, and rarely shown.
Hear then, ye mournful parents, and divide
That love in many, which in one was tied.
That individual blessing is no more,
But multiplied in your remaining store.

The flame's dispers'd, but does not all expire;
The sparkles blaze, though not the globe of fire.
Love him by parts, in all your numerous race,
And from those parts form one collected grace;
Then, when you have refin'd to that degree,
Imagine all in one, and think that one is he.

UPON

YOUNG MASTER ROGERS,

OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

Of gentle blood, his parents' only treasure,
Their lasting sorrow, and their vanish'd pleasure;
Adorn'd with features, virtues, wit, and grace,
A large provision for so short a race;
More moderate gifts might have prolong'd his date,
Too early fitted for a better state;
But, knowing Heaven his home, to shun delay,
He leap'd o'er age, and took the shortest way.

ON

THE DEATH OF MR. PURCELL.

SET TO MUSIC BY DR. BLOW.

Mark how the lark and linnet sing;
With rival notes
They strain their warbling throats
To welcome in the Spring.

But in the close of night,
When Philomel begins her heavenly lay,
They cease their mutual spite,
Drink in her music with delight,
And, listening, silently obey.

So ceas'd the rival crew, when Purcell came;
They sung no more, or only sung his fame:
Struck dumb, they all admir'd the godlike man:
The godlike man,
Alas! too soon retir'd,
As he too late began.
We beg not Hell our Orpheus to restore:
Had he been there,
Their sovereign's fear
Had sent him back before.
The power of harmony too well they knew;
He long ere this had tun'd their jarring sphere,
And left no hell below.

The heavenly choir, who heard his notes from high,
Let down the scale of music from the sky:
They handed him along,
And all the way he taught, and all the way they sung.
Ye brethren of the lyre, and tuneful voice,
Lament his lot; but at your own rejoice:
Now live secure, and linger out your days;
The gods are pleas'd alone with Purcell's lays,
Nor know to mend their choice.

ON

THE LADY WHITMORE.

Fair, kind, and true; a treasure each, alone,
A wife, a mistress, and a friend, in one,
Rest in this tomb, rais'd at thy husband's cost,
Here sadly summing what he had—and lost.
Come, Virgins, ere in equal bands ye join,
Come first, and offer at her sacred shrine;
Pray but for half the virtues of this wife,
Compound for all the rest with longer life;
And wish your vows, like hers, may be return'd,
So lov'd when living, and when dead so mourn'd.

ON

SIR PALMES FAIRBONE'S TOMB,

IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

Sacred to the immortal memory of Sir Palmes Fairbone, *Knight, Governor of Tangier; in execution of which command he was mortally wounded by a shot from the Moors, then besieging the town, in the forty-sixth year of his age, October* 24, 1680.

Ye sacred relics, which your marble keep,
Here, undisturb'd by wars, in quiet sleep:
Discharge the trust, which, when it was below,
Fairbone's undaunted soul did undergo,
And be the town's Palladium from the foe.

Alive and dead, these walls he will defend:
Great actions great examples must attend.
The Candian siege his early valour knew,
Where Turkish blood did his young hands imbrue:
From thence returning with deserv'd applause,
Against the Moors his well-flesh'd sword he draws;
The same the courage, and the same the cause.
His youth and age, his life and death combine,
As in some great and regular design,
All of a piece throughout, and all divine.
Still nearer Heaven his virtues shone more bright,
Like rising flames, expanding in their height;
The martyr's glory crown'd the soldier's fight.
More bravely British general never fell,
Nor general's death was e'er reveng'd so well;
Which his pleas'd eyes beheld before their close,
Follow'd by thousand victims of his foes.
To his lamented loss, for time to come,
His pious widow consecrates this tomb.

UNDER

THE PICTURE OF MILTON,

BEFORE HIS PARADISE LOST.

Three poets, in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England, did adorn.
The first in loftiness of thought surpass'd;
The next in majesty; in both the last.
The force of Nature could no further go;
To make a third she join'd the former two.

ON THE

MONUMENT OF MARY FRAMPTON,

A FAIR MAIDEN LADY, WHO DIED AT BATH, AND IS THERE INTERRED. Ob. Sept. 6, 1698.

Below this marble monument is laid
All that Heaven wants of this celestial maid;
Preserve, O sacred tomb! thy trust consign'd;
The mould was made on purpose for the mind,
And she would lose, if, at the latter day,
One atom could be mix'd of other clay.
Such were the features of her heavenly face,
Her limbs were form'd with such harmonious grace,
So faultless was the frame, as if the whole
Had been an emanation of the soul,
Which her own inward symmetry reveal'd,
And like a picture shone, in glass anneal'd;
Or like the sun eclips'd, with shaded light,
Too piercing, else, to be sustain'd by sight;
Each thought was visible that roll'd within,
As through a crystal case the figur'd hours are seen:
And Heaven did this transparent veil provide,
Because she had no guilty thought to hide.
All white, a virgin-saint, she sought the skies;
For marriage, though it sullies not it dyes.
High though her wit, yet humble was her mind;
As if she could not, or she would not find,
How much her worth transcended all her kind.
Yet she had learn'd so much of Heav'n below,
That, when arriv'd, she scarce had more to know;

But only to refresh the former hint,
And read her Maker in a fairer print:
So pious, as she had no time to spare
For human thoughts, but was confin'd to pray'r;
Yet in such charities she pass'd the day,
'Twas wondrous how she found an hour to pray.
A soul so calm, it knew not ebbs or flows,
Which passion could but curl, not discompose.
A female softness, with a manly mind;
A daughter duteous, and a sister kind;
In sickness patient, and in death resign'd.

ON

MRS. MARGARET PASTON,

OF BURNINGHAM IN NORFOLK.

So fair, so young, so innocent, so sweet,
So ripe a judgment, and so rare a wit,
Require at least an age in one to meet.
In her they met; but long they could not stay,
'Twas gold too fine to mix, without allay.
Heaven's image was in her so well exprest,
Her very sight upbraided all the rest;
Too justly ravish'd from an age like this,
Now she is gone, the world is of a piece.

ON THE MONUMENT OF THE

MARQUIS OF WINCHESTER. Ob. 1674.

He who in impious times undaunted stood,
And 'midst rebellion durst be just and good;
Whose arms asserted, and whose sufferings more
Confirm'd the cause for which he fought before,
Rests here rewarded by a heavenly prince;
For what his earthly could not recompense.
Pray, Reader, that such times no more appear:
Or, if they happen, learn true honour here.
Ask of this age's faith and loyalty,
Which, to preserve them, Heaven confin'd in thee:
Few subjects could a king like thine deserve,
And fewer such a king so well could serve.
Blest king, blest subject, whose exalted state
By sufferings rose, and gave the law to fate.
Such souls are rare, but mighty patterns given
To earth, and meant for ornaments to Heaven.

ODES.

ALEXANDER'S FEAST:

OR

THE POWER OF MUSIC.

AN ODE.

IN HONOUR OF ST. CECILIA'S DAY.

'Twas at the royal feast, for Persia won
By Philip's warlike son:
Aloft in awful state
The godlike hero sate
On his imperial throne:
His valiant peers were plac'd around,
Their brows with roses and with myrtles bound;
(So should desert in arms be crown'd)
The lovely Thais by his side
Sate like a blooming eastern bride,
In flower of youth, and beauty's pride.
Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

CHORUS.

Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

Timotheus, plac'd on high
Amid the tuneful quire,
With flying fingers touch'd the lyre:
The trembling notes ascend the sky,
And heavenly joys inspire.
The song began from Jove,
Who left his blissful seats above,
(Such is the power of mighty love)
A dragon's fiery form belied the god:
Sublime on radiant spires he rode,
When he to fair Olympia prest;
And while he sought her snowy breast;
Then round her slender waist he curl'd, [world!
And stamp'd an image of himself, a sovereign of the
The listening crowd admire the lofty sound;
'A present deity,' they shout around:
'A present deity,' the vaulted roofs rebound.
With ravish'd ears
The monarch hears;
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

CHORUS.

With ravish'd ears
The monarch hears;
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

The praise of Bacchus then the sweet musician sung;
Of Bacchus, ever fair and ever young:
The jolly god in triumph comes;
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums:

Flush'd with a purple grace,
He shows his honest face.
Now give the hautboys breath. He comes! he comes!
Bacchus, ever fair and young,
Drinking joys did first ordain;
Bacchus' blessings are a treasure;
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure:
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure;
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

CHORUS.

Bacchus' blessings are a treasure;
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure:
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure;
Sweet is the pleasure after pain.

Sooth'd with the sound, the King grew vain;
Fought all his battles o'er again;
And thrice he routed all his foes, and thrice he slew the slain.
The master saw the madness rise;
His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes;
And, while he heav'n and earth defied,
Chang'd his hand, and check'd his pride.
He chose a mournful muse,
Soft pity to infuse:
He sung Darius, great and good;
By too severe a fate,
Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
Fallen from his high estate,
And weltering in his blood;
Deserted at his utmost need
By those his former bounty fed;

On the bare earth expos'd he lies,
With not a friend to close his eyes,
With down-cast looks the joyless victor sate,
Revolving in his alter'd soul
The various turns of chance below;
And, now and then, a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.

CHORUS.

Revolving in his alter'd soul
The various turns of chance below;
And, now and then, a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.

The mighty master smil'd to see
That love was in the next degree:
'Twas but a kindred sound to move,
For pity melts the mind to love.
Softly sweet, in Lydian measures,
Soon he sooth'd his soul to pleasures,
War, he sung, is toil and trouble,
Honour but an empty bubble;
Never ending, still beginning,
Fighting still, and still destroying:
If the world be worth thy winning,
Think, O think it worth enjoying.
Lovely Thais sits beside thee;
Take the good the gods provide thee.
The many rend the skies with loud applause;
So love was crown'd, but Music won the cause.
The Prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gaz'd on the fair,
Who caus'd his care,
And sigh'd and look'd, sigh'd and look'd,

Sigh'd and look'd, and sigh'd again.
At length, with love and wine at once opprest,
The vanquish'd victor sunk upon her breast.

CHORUS.

The Prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gaz'd on the fair
Who caus'd his care,
And sigh'd and look'd, sigh'd and look'd,
Sigh'd and look'd, and sigh'd again.
At length, with love and wine at once opprest,
The vanquish'd victor sunk upon her breast.

Now strike the golden lyre again:
A louder yet, and yet a louder strain.
Break his bands of sleep asunder,
And rouse him, like a rattling peal of thunder.
Hark! hark! the horrid sound
Has rais'd up his head,
As awak'd from the dead,
And amaz'd he stares around.
Revenge, revenge, Timotheus cries,
See the furies arise;
See the snakes that they rear,
How they hiss in their hair!
And the sparkles that flash from their eyes!
Behold a ghastly band,
Each a torch in his hand!
Those are Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain,
And unburied remain
Inglorious on the plain:
Give the vengeance due
To the valiant crew.

Behold how they toss their torches on high,
How they point to the Persian abodes,
And glittering temples of their hostile gods!
The princes applaud with a furious joy,
And the King seiz'd a flambeau, with zeal to destroy:
Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey;
And, like another Helen, fir'd another Troy.

CHORUS.

And the King seiz'd a flambeau, with zeal to destroy:
Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey;
And, like another Helen, fir'd another Troy.

Thus long ago,
Ere heaving bellows learn'd to blow,
While organs yet were mute,
Timotheus to his breathing flute
And sounding lyre,
Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire.
At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
Enlarg'd the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With Nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown;
He rais'd a mortal to the skies,
She drew an angel down.

GRAND CHORUS.

At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
Enlarg'd the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With Nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown;
He rais'd a mortal to the skies,
She drew an angel down.

VENI CREATOR SPIRITUS.

PARAPHRASED.

Creator Spirit! by whose aid
The world's foundations first were laid,
Come visit every pious mind;
Come pour thy joys on humankind;
From sin and sorrow set us free,
And make thy temples worthy thee!
O source of uncreated light,
The Father's promis'd Paraclete!
Thrice Holy Fount, thrice Holy Fire,
Our hearts with heavenly love inspire;
Come, and thy sacred unction bring
To sanctify us, while we sing.
Plenteous of grace, descend from high,
Rich in thy sevenfold energy!

Thou strength of his Almighty-hand,
Whose power does Heaven and earth command!
Proceeding Spirit, our defence,
Who dost the gift of tongues dispense,
And crown'st thy gift with eloquence!
Refine and purge our earthly parts;
But, oh, inflame and fire our hearts!
Our frailties help, our vice control,
Submit the senses to the soul;
And when rebellious they are grown,
Then lay thy hand, and hold them down.
Chase from our minds the' infernal foe,
And peace, the fruit of love, bestow;
And, lest our feet should step astray,
Protect, and guide us in the way.
Make us eternal truths receive,
And practise all that we believe:
Give us thyself, that we may see
The Father, and the Son, by thee.
Immortal honour, endless fame,
Attend the' Almighty-Father's name!
The Saviour-Son be glorified,
Who for lost man's redemption died;
And equal adoration be,
Eternal Paraclete to thee!

END OF VOL. XII.